

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2015**

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**D**

**HOUSE BILL 548**  
**PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H548-CSTC-32 [v.3]**

4/27/2015 11:18:30 AM

Short Title: Zoning/Modernize & Reorganize.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 2, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO REORGANIZE, CLARIFY, AND MODERNIZE STATUTES REGARDING  
LOCAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATION.

Whereas, the statutes authorizing planning and development regulation by North Carolina local governments were initially enacted in the early 20th century to address needs that have evolved significantly since that time; and

Whereas, numerous statutes have been added and changes have been made to original statutes using the original structure that is no longer appropriate for the range of statutes now authorized; and

Whereas, antiquated and confusing language continued in many of the planning and development regulation statutes and they lack the clarity needed in the 21st century; and

Whereas, other than collecting these statutes into Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes in 1971 and Article 18 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes in 1973, no comprehensive reorganization and recodification of North Carolina's planning and development regulation statutes has been undertaken; and

Whereas, the parallel system of city and county authority has led to inadvertent and unintended differences in the wording of the planning and development regulation statutes over time; and

Whereas, coherent organization, clarification, modernization, and incorporation of key common law principles into the planning and development regulation statutes provides clarity and uniformity for all who use and are affected by local planning and development regulations and will make the statutes and local regulations easier to follow, simpler to find, and consistent with 21st century business and government needs; and

Whereas, there is a need for policy neutral or consensus amendments that modernize the planning and development regulation statutes in a manner that does not eliminate, diminish, enlarge, or expand the powers currently exercised by cities and counties.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Article 18 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes is repealed.

**SECTION 2.** Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes is repealed.

**SECTION 3.** The General Statutes are amended by adding a new Chapter to read:

"Chapter 160D.

"Local Planning and Development Regulation.

"Article 1.

"General Provisions.

"§ 160D-1-1. Application.



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(a) The provisions of this Article shall apply to all ordinances and programs adopted pursuant to this Chapter or applicable local acts. To the extent there are contrary provisions in local charters or acts, G.S. 160D-1-12 is applicable unless this Chapter expressly provides otherwise. The provisions of this Article also apply to any other local ordinance that substantially affects land use and development.

(b) The provisions of this Article are supplemental to specific provisions included in other Articles of this Chapter. To the extent there are conflicts between the provisions of this Article and the provisions of other Articles of this Chapter, the more specific provisions shall control.

(c) Local governments may apply any of the definitions and procedures authorized by this Chapter to any ordinance adopted under the general police power of cities and counties, Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes and Article 6 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes respectively, and may employ any organizational structure, board, commission, or staffing arrangement authorized by this Chapter to any or all aspects of those ordinances.

**"§ 160-1-2. Definitions.**

Unless otherwise specifically provided, or unless otherwise clearly required by the context, the words and phrases defined in this section shall have the meaning indicated when used in this Chapter.

- (1) "Administrative decision" means decisions made in the implementation, administration, or enforcement of development regulations that involve the determination of facts and application of objective standards set forth in this Chapter or local government ordinances. These are sometimes referred to as "ministerial" decisions or "administrative determinations."
- (2) "Administrative hearing" means a proceeding for the purpose of gathering facts needed to make an administrative decision.
- (3) "Bona fide farm purposes" means those agricultural activities set forth in G.S. 160D-9-3.
- (4) "Charter" shall have the same meaning as set forth in G.S. 160A-1(2).
- (5) "City" shall have the same meaning as set forth in G.S. 160A-1(2).
- (6) "Comprehensive plan" means those plans that have been officially adopted by the governing board pursuant to G.S. 160D-5-1.
- (7) "Conditional zoning" means a zoning map amendment with site specific conditions incorporated into the zoning map amendment.
- (8) "County" means any one of the counties listed in G.S. 153A-10.
- (9) "Decision-making board" means a governing board, planning board, board of adjustment, historic district board, or other board assigned to make quasi-judicial decisions under this Chapter.
- (10) "Determination" means a written, final and binding order, requirement, or determination regarding an administrative decision.
- (11) "Developer" means a person, including a governmental agency or redevelopment authority, who undertakes any development and who is the landowner of the property to be developed or who has been authorized by the landowner to undertake development on that property.
- (12) "Development approval" means a permit or other administrative or quasi-judicial written approval pursuant to an ordinance adopted under this Chapter that is required prior to commencing development or undertaking a specific project or development proposal. Development approvals include plat approvals issued pursuant to Article 8 of this Chapter and development agreements entered into pursuant to Article 10 of this Chapter. It also includes building permits issued pursuant to Article 11 of this Chapter.

- (13) "Development regulation" means a unified development ordinance, zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, erosion and sedimentation control ordinance, floodplain or flood damage prevention ordinance, mountain ridge protection ordinance, stormwater control ordinance, wireless telecommunication facility ordinance, historic preservation or landmark ordinance, State Building Code, housing code, or any other ordinance adopted pursuant to this Chapter or a local act or charter that regulates land use or development.
- (14) "Dwelling" means any building, structure, manufactured home or mobile home, or part thereof, used and occupied for human habitation or intended to be so used, and includes any outhouses and appurtenances belonging thereto or usually enjoyed therewith, except that for the purposes of Article 12 of this Chapter, it does not include any manufactured home, mobile home, or recreational vehicle, if used solely for a seasonal vacation purpose.
- (15) "Evidentiary hearing" means a hearing to gather competent, material, and substantial evidence in order to make findings for a quasi-judicial decision required by an ordinance adopted under this Chapter.
- (16) "Governing board" means the city council or board of county commissioners. The term is interchangeable with the terms "board of aldermen" and "boards of commissioners" and shall mean any governing board without regard to the terminology employed in charters, local acts, other portions of the General Statutes, or local customary usage.
- (17) "Landowner" or "owner" means the holder of the title in fee simple interest as shown in the county tax records unless the context expressly provides otherwise. The landowner may authorize a person holding a valid option, lease, or contract to purchase to act as his or her agent or representative.
- (18) "Legislative decision" means the adoption, amendment, or repeal of an ordinance under this Chapter or an applicable local act. It also includes the decision to approve, amend, or rescind a development agreement consistent with the provisions of Article 10 of this Chapter.
- (19) "Legislative hearing" means a hearing to solicit public comment on a proposed legislative decision.
- (20) "Local act" shall have the same meaning as set forth in G.S. 160A-1(2).
- (21) "Local government" means a city or county.
- (22) "Manufactured home" or "mobile home" means a structure as defined in G.S. 143-145(7).
- (23) "Permit" means an administrative or quasi-judicial written approval required prior to commencing development or undertaking a specific activity, project or development proposal. A permit includes, but is not limited to, a building permit, zoning permit, site plan approval, subdivision approval, special use permit, certificate of appropriateness, or variance.
- (24) "Person" means an individual, partnership, firm, association, joint venture, public or private corporation, trust, estate, commission, board, public or private institution, utility, cooperative, interstate body, the State of North Carolina and its agencies and political subdivisions, or other legal entity.
- (25) "Planning board" means any board established pursuant to G.S. 160D-3-1.
- (26) "Property" means all real property subject to land-use regulation by a local government and includes any improvements or structures customarily regarded as a part of real property.
- (27) "Quasi-judicial decision" means a decision involving the finding of facts regarding a specific application of an ordinance and that requires the

exercise of discretion when applying the standards of the ordinance. Quasi-judicial decisions include, but are not limited to, decisions involving variances, special use permits, certificates of appropriateness, and appeals of administrative determinations. Decisions on the approval of subdivision plats and site plans are quasi-judicial in nature if the ordinance authorizes a decision-making board to approve or deny the application based not only upon whether the application complies with the specific requirements set forth in the ordinance, but also on whether the application complies with one or more generally stated standards requiring a discretionary decision on the findings to be made by the decision-making board.

(28) "Site plan" means a scaled drawing showing the relationship between lot lines and the existing or proposed uses, buildings, or structures on the lot, including, but not limited to, site-specific details such as building areas, building height and floor area, setbacks from lot lines and street rights-of-way, intensities, densities, utility lines and locations, parking areas, access points, roads, and stormwater control facilities required to show compliance with all legally required development regulations that are applicable to a project and the site plan review. A site plan approval based solely upon application of objective standards is an administrative decision and a site plan approval based in whole or in part upon the application of standards involving judgment and discretion is a quasi-judicial decision.

(29) "Special use permit" means a permit issued to authorize development or land uses in a particular zoning district upon presentation of competent, material, and substantial evidence establishing compliance with one or more general standards requiring that judgment and appropriate discretion be exercised as well as compliance with specific ordinance standards. This definition includes permits previously referred to as "conditional use permits" or "special exceptions."

(30) "Subdivision" means the division of land for the purpose of sale or development as specified in G.S. 160D-8-2.

(31) "Subdivision regulation" means a subdivision ordinance authorized by Article 8 of this Chapter or the subdivision portion of a unified development ordinance.

(32) "Vested right" means the right to undertake and complete the development and use of property under the terms and conditions of an approval secured as specified in G.S. 160D-1-8 or under common law.

(33) "Zoning map amendment" or "rezoning" means an amendment to a zoning ordinance to change the zoning district that is applied to a specified property or properties. It does not include the initial adoption of a zoning map by a local government, but it does include the initial application of zoning when land is added to the territorial jurisdiction of a local government that has previously adopted zoning regulations. It includes the application of an overlay zoning district or a conditional zoning district.

(34) "Zoning regulation" means a zoning ordinance authorized by Article 7 of this Chapter or the zoning portion of a unified development ordinance.

**"§ 160D-1-3. Unified development ordinance.**

A local government may elect to combine any of the ordinances authorized by this Chapter into a unified ordinance. Unless expressly provided otherwise, a local government may apply any of the definitions and procedures authorized by law to any or all aspects of the unified ordinance and may employ any organizational structure, board, commission, or staffing arrangement authorized by law to any or all aspects of the ordinance. Inclusion of an ordinance

1 authorized by this Chapter or local act in a unified development ordinance does not expand,  
2 diminish, or alter the scope of authority for those ordinance provisions.

3 **"§ 160D-1-4. Development approvals run with the land.**

4 Unless provided otherwise by law, all rights, privileges, benefits, burdens, and obligations  
5 created by development approvals made pursuant to this Chapter attach to and run with the  
6 land.

7 **"§ 160D-1-5. Maps.**

8 (a) Zoning Map. Zoning district boundaries and any other boundaries included within a  
9 map that is part of a development regulation adopted pursuant to this Chapter shall be drawn on  
10 a map that is adopted or incorporated within a duly adopted development regulation. Zoning  
11 district maps that are so adopted shall be maintained in the office of the local government clerk  
12 or such other office as specified in the development ordinance. The maps may be in paper or a  
13 digital format approved by the local government.

14 (b) Incorporation by Reference. Ordinances adopted pursuant to this Chapter may  
15 reference or incorporate by reference maps, flood insurance rate maps, and watershed boundary  
16 maps officially adopted or promulgated by state and federal agencies. An ordinance text or  
17 zoning map may reference a specific officially adopted map or may incorporate by reference  
18 the most recent officially adopted version of such maps. When zoning district boundaries are  
19 based on these maps, the ordinance may provide that the zoning district boundaries are  
20 automatically amended to remain consistent with changes in the promulgated state or federal  
21 maps, provided a copy of the currently effective version of any incorporated map shall be  
22 maintained for public inspection in the office of the local government clerk.

23 (c) Copies. Copies of the zoning district map reproduced by any method of  
24 reproduction that gives legible and permanent copies, when certified by the local government  
25 clerk in accordance with G.S. 160A-79 or G.S. 153A-50, shall be admissible in evidence and  
26 shall have the same force and effect as would the original map.

27 **"§ 160D-1-6. Refund of illegal fees.**

28 If a local government is found to have illegally imposed a tax, fee, or monetary contribution  
29 for development or a development permit not specifically authorized by law, the local  
30 government shall return the tax, fee, or monetary contribution plus interest of six percent (6%)  
31 per annum to the person who made the payment or as directed by a court if the person making  
32 the payment is no longer in existence.

33 **"§ 160D-1-7. Moratoria.**

34 (a) Authority. As provided in this section, local governments may adopt temporary  
35 moratoria on any development approval required by law, except for the purpose of developing  
36 and adopting new or amended plans or ordinances governing residential uses. The duration of  
37 any moratorium shall be reasonable in light of the specific conditions that warrant imposition of  
38 the moratorium and may not exceed the period of time necessary to correct, modify, or resolve  
39 such conditions.

40 (b) Hearing Required. Except in cases of imminent and substantial threat to public  
41 health or safety, before adopting an ordinance imposing a development moratorium with a  
42 duration of 60 days or any shorter period, the governing board shall hold a legislative hearing  
43 and shall publish a notice of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the area  
44 not less than seven days before the date set for the hearing. A development moratorium with a  
45 duration of 61 days or longer, and any extension of a moratorium so that the total duration is 61  
46 days or longer, is subject to the notice and hearing requirements of G.S. 160D-6-1.

47 (c) Exempt Projects. Absent an imminent threat to public health or safety, a  
48 development moratorium adopted pursuant to this section shall not apply to any project for  
49 which a valid building permit issued pursuant to G.S. 160D-11-8 is outstanding, to any project  
50 for which a special use permit application has been accepted as complete, to development set  
51 forth in a site-specific or phased vesting plan approved pursuant to G.S. 160D-1-8, to



development for which substantial expenditures have already been made in good faith reliance on a prior valid development approval, or to preliminary or final subdivision plats that have been accepted for review by the local government prior to the call for a hearing to adopt the moratorium. Any preliminary subdivision plat accepted for review by the local government prior to the call for a legislative hearing, if subsequently approved, shall be allowed to proceed to final plat approval without being subject to the moratorium.

(d) Required Statements. Any ordinance establishing a development moratorium must include at the time of adoption each of the following:

(1) A clear statement of the problems or conditions necessitating the moratorium and what courses of action, alternative to a moratorium, were considered by the local government and why those alternative courses of action were not deemed adequate.

(2) A clear statement of the development approvals subject to the moratorium and how a moratorium on those approvals will address the problems or conditions leading to imposition of the moratorium.

(3) A date for termination of the moratorium and a statement setting forth why that duration is reasonably necessary to address the problems or conditions leading to imposition of the moratorium.

(4) A clear statement of the actions, and the schedule for those actions, proposed to be taken by the local government during the duration of the moratorium to address the problems or conditions leading to imposition of the moratorium.

(e) Limit on Renewal or Extension. No moratorium may be subsequently renewed or extended for any additional period unless the local government shall have taken all reasonable and feasible steps proposed to be taken in its ordinance establishing the moratorium to address the problems or conditions leading to imposition of the moratorium and unless new facts and conditions warrant an extension. Any ordinance renewing or extending a development moratorium must include, at the time of adoption, the findings set forth in subdivisions (1) through (4) of this subsection, including what new facts or conditions warrant the extension.

(f) Expedited Judicial Review. Any person aggrieved by the imposition of a moratorium on development approvals required by law may apply to the General Court of Justice for an order enjoining the enforcement of the moratorium. Actions brought pursuant to this section shall be scheduled for immediate hearing, and subsequent proceedings in those actions shall be accorded priority by the trial and appellate courts. In such actions, the local government shall have the burden of showing compliance with the procedural requirements of this subsection.

**"§ 160D-1-8. Vested rights.**

(a) Findings. The General Assembly recognizes that local government approval of land-use development typically follows significant landowner investment in site evaluation, planning, development costs, consultant fees, and related expenses. The General Assembly finds that it is necessary and desirable to provide for the establishment of certain vested rights in order to ensure reasonable certainty, stability, and fairness in the land-use planning process, secure the reasonable expectations of landowners, and foster cooperation between the public and private sectors in the area of land-use planning.

The ability of a landowner to obtain a vested right after local government approval of a site specific vesting plan or a phased vesting plan will preserve the prerogatives and authority of local elected officials with respect to land-use matters. There will be ample opportunities for public participation, and the public interest will be served. These provisions will strike an appropriate balance between private expectations and the public interest, while protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

(b) Permit Choice.

- (1) If an application is submitted for a development approval required pursuant to this Chapter and a rule or ordinance changes between the time the application was submitted and a decision is made, the applicant may choose which version of the rule or ordinance will apply to the application.
- (2) This section applies to all development approvals issued by the State and by local governments, except this section shall not apply to any development approval issued pursuant to a zoning regulation authorized by Article 7 of this Chapter.
- (c) Vested Right.
- (1) Process when common law vested right is claimed. A person claiming a common law vested right may submit information to substantiate that claim to the zoning administrator or other officer designated by a development regulation, who shall make an initial determination as to the existence of the vested right. The zoning administrator's or officer's determination may be appealed under G.S. 160D-4-5. On appeal the existence of a vested right shall be considered a question of law subject to de novo review. In lieu of seeking such a determination, a person claiming a common law vested right may bring an original civil action as provided by G.S. 160D-4-5(b).
- (2) Local development permits. Amendments in local development regulations shall not be applicable or enforceable without consent of the owner with regard to development that has been authorized by local development approvals issued pursuant to <sup>this Chapter</sup> prior to the enactment of the ordinance making the change or changes so long as the approvals remain valid and unexpired pursuant to G.S. 160D-4-3. The scope of development vested by this subsection is limited to the development specifically authorized by a valid local development approval.
- (3) Site-specific and phased vesting plans. A vested right shall be deemed established with respect to any property upon the valid approval of a site-specific or a phased vesting plan. Notice and hearing is required for approval of a vesting plan. If the vesting plan is based on an approval that is quasi-judicial, an evidentiary hearing shall be held; otherwise, a legislative hearing shall be held. Such vested right shall confer upon the landowner the right to undertake and complete the development and use of the property under the terms and conditions of the site-specific or the phased vesting plan including any applicable amendments. A local government may approve a site-specific or a phased vesting plan upon such terms and conditions as may reasonably be necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Such conditional approval shall result in a vested right, although failure to abide by such terms and conditions will result in a forfeiture of vested rights. A local government shall not require a landowner to waive his vested rights as a condition of developmental approval. A site-specific vesting plan or a phased vesting plan shall be deemed approved upon the effective date of the local government's decision approving the plan or such other date as determined by the governing board upon approval. An approved site-specific or phased vesting plan and its conditions may be amended with the approval of the owner and the local government. Any substantial modification must be reviewed and approved in the same manner as the original approval. Minor modifications may be approved by staff, if such are defined and authorized by local ordinance.
- (4) Development agreements. A vested right is established under a development agreement approved under Article 10 of this Chapter.

- 1           (5)    Interrelated nature of vested rights. Vested rights established under these  
2               subsections are not mutually exclusive. The establishment of a vested right  
3               under one subsection does not preclude vesting under one or more other  
4               subsections.
- 5       (d)    Duration and Termination of Site-Specific and Phased Vesting Plans.
- 6           (1)    A right which has been vested for a site-specific vesting plan as provided for  
7               in this section shall remain vested for a period of two years. This vesting  
8               shall not be extended by any amendments or modifications to a site-specific  
9               vesting plan unless expressly provided by the local government.
- 10          (2)    Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, a local  
11               government may provide that rights regarding a site-specific vesting plan  
12               shall be vested for a period exceeding two years but not exceeding five  
13               years, where if warranted by the size and phasing of development, the level  
14               of investment, the need for the development, economic cycles, and market  
15               conditions or other considerations. This determination shall be in the  
16               discretion of the local government.
- 17          (3)    Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) and subdivision (2) of this  
18               subsection, the local government may provide by ordinance that approval by  
19               a local government of a phased vesting plan shall vest the zoning  
20               classification or classifications so approved for a period not to exceed five  
21               years. The document that triggers such vesting shall be so identified at the  
22               time of its approval. The local government still may require the landowner to  
23               submit a site-specific vesting plan for approval by the local government with  
24               respect to each phase or phases in order to obtain final approval to develop  
25               within the restrictions of the vested zoning classification or classifications.  
26               Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a local government to  
27               adopt an ordinance providing for vesting of rights upon approval of a phased  
28               vesting plan.
- 29          (4)    Following approval or conditional approval of a site-specific or a phased  
30               vesting plan, nothing in this section shall exempt such a plan from  
31               subsequent reviews and approvals by the local government to ensure  
32               compliance with the terms and conditions of the original approval, provided  
33               that such reviews and approvals are not inconsistent with the original  
34               approval. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the local government from  
35               revoking the original approval for failure to comply with applicable terms  
36               and conditions of the approval or the local development regulations.
- 37          (5)    Upon issuance of a building permit, the provisions of G.S. 160D-11-9 and  
38               G.S. 160D-11-13 shall apply, except that the permit shall not expire or be  
39               revoked because of the running of time while a vested right under this  
40               section is outstanding.
- 41          (6)    A right which has been vested as provided in this section shall terminate at  
42               the end of the applicable vesting period with respect to buildings and uses  
43               for which no valid building permit applications have been filed.
- 44       (e)    Subsequent Changes in Development Regulation Not Applicable to Site-Specific  
45       and Phased Vesting Plans; Exceptions.
- 46           (1)    A vested right, once established as provided for in this section, precludes any  
47               action by a local government which would change, alter, impair, prevent,  
48               diminish, or otherwise delay the development or use of the property as set  
49               forth in an approved site-specific or phased vesting plan, except:  
50           a.    With the written consent of the affected landowner;



- 1                    b. Upon findings, after notice and an evidentiary hearing, that natural or  
2                    man-made hazards on or in the immediate vicinity of the property, if  
3                    uncorrected, would pose a serious threat to the public health and  
4                    safety if the project were to proceed as contemplated in the  
5                    site-specific or the phased vesting plan;  
6                    c. To the extent that the affected landowner receives compensation for  
7                    all costs, expenses, and other losses incurred by the landowner,  
8                    including, but not limited to, all fees paid in consideration of  
9                    financing, and all architectural, planning, marketing, legal, and other  
10                   consultant's fees incurred after approval by the local government,  
11                   together with interest as is provided in G.S. 160D-1-6. Compensation  
12                   shall not include any diminution in the value of the property which is  
13                   caused by such action;  
14                   d. Upon findings, after notice and an evidentiary hearing, that the  
15                   landowner or his representative intentionally supplied inaccurate  
16                   information or made material misrepresentations which made a  
17                   difference in the approval by the local government of the site-specific  
18                   or the phased vesting plan; or  
19                   e. Upon the enactment or promulgation of a State or federal law or  
20                   regulation that precludes development as contemplated in the  
21                   site-specific or the phased vesting plan, in which case the local  
22                   government may modify the affected provisions, upon a finding that  
23                   the change in State or federal law has a fundamental effect on the  
24                   plan, after notice and an evidentiary hearing.  
25                   (2) The establishment of a vested right under a site-specific or a phased vesting  
26                   plan shall not preclude the application of overlay zoning which imposes  
27                   additional requirements but does not affect the allowable type or intensity of  
28                   use, or ordinances or regulations which are general in nature and are  
29                   applicable to all property subject to land-use regulation by a local  
30                   government, including, but not limited to, building, fire, plumbing,  
31                   electrical, and mechanical codes. Otherwise applicable new regulations shall  
32                   become effective with respect to property which is subject to a site-specific  
33                   or a phased vesting plan upon the expiration or termination of the vested  
34                   rights period provided for in this section.  
35                   (3) Notwithstanding any provision of this section, the establishment of a vested  
36                   right under a site-specific or a phased vesting plan shall not preclude,  
37                   change, or impair the authority of a local government to adopt and enforce  
38                   ordinance provisions governing nonconforming situations or uses.  
39                   (f) Miscellaneous Provisions.  
40                   (1) A vested right obtained under this section is not a personal right but shall  
41                   attach to and run with the applicable property. After approval of a  
42                   site-specific or a phased vesting plan, all successors to the original  
43                   landowner shall be entitled to exercise such rights.  
44                   (2) Nothing in this section shall preclude judicial determination, based on  
45                   common law principles or other statutory provisions, that a vested right  
46                   exists in a particular case or that a compensable taking has occurred. Except  
47                   as expressly provided in this section, nothing in this section shall be  
48                   construed to alter the existing common law.  
49                   (3) In the event a local government fails to adopt an ordinance setting forth what  
50                   constitutes a site-specific vesting plan triggering a vested right, a landowner  
51                   may establish a vested right upon the approval of a permit, or otherwise may

1 seek appropriate relief from the Superior Court Division of the General  
2 Court of Justice.

3 (g) Definitions. For the purposes of this section:

4 (1) "Site-specific vesting plan" means a plan that has been submitted to a local  
5 government by a landowner pursuant to this section describing with  
6 reasonable certainty the type and intensity of use for a specific parcel or  
7 parcels of property. Such plan may be in the form of, but not limited to, any  
8 of the following plans or approvals: A planned unit development plan, a  
9 subdivision plat, a site plan, a preliminary or general development plan, a  
10 special use permit, a conditional zoning, or any other development approval  
11 as may be used by a local government. Unless otherwise expressly provided  
12 by the local government, such a plan shall include the approximate  
13 boundaries of the site; significant topographical and other natural features  
14 affecting development of the site; the approximate location on the site of the  
15 proposed buildings, structures, and other improvements; the approximate  
16 dimensions, including height, of the proposed buildings and other structures;  
17 and the approximate location of all existing and proposed infrastructure on  
18 the site, including water, sewer, roads, and pedestrian walkways. What  
19 constitutes a site-specific vesting plan shall be finally determined by the  
20 local government pursuant to an ordinance, and the document that triggers  
21 vesting shall be so identified at the time of its approval. At a minimum, the  
22 ordinance shall designate a vesting point earlier than the issuance of a  
23 building permit. A variance shall not constitute a "site-specific vesting plan,"  
24 and approval of a site-specific vesting plan with the condition that a variance  
25 be obtained shall not confer a vested right unless and until the necessary  
26 variance is obtained. If a sketch plan or other document fails to describe with  
27 reasonable certainty the type and intensity of use for a specified parcel or  
28 parcels of property, it may not constitute a site-specific vesting plan.

29 (2) "Phased vesting plan" means a plan which has been submitted to a local  
30 government by a landowner or developer for phased development which  
31 shows the type and intensity of use for a specific parcel or parcels with a  
32 lesser degree of certainty than a site-specific vesting plan.

33 **"§ 160D-1-9. Conflicts of interest.**

34 (a) Governing Board. A governing board member shall not vote on any legislative  
35 decision regarding an ordinance adopted pursuant to this Chapter where the outcome of the  
36 matter being considered is reasonably likely to have a direct, substantial, and readily  
37 identifiable financial impact on the member. A governing board member shall not vote on a  
38 zoning amendment if the landowner of the property subject to a rezoning petition or the  
39 applicant for a text amendment is a person with whom the member has a close familial,  
40 business, or other associational relationship.

41 (b) Appointed Boards. Members of appointed boards providing advice to the governing  
42 board shall not vote on recommendations regarding any legislative decision regarding an  
43 ordinance adopted pursuant to this Chapter where the outcome of the matter being considered is  
44 reasonably likely to have a direct, substantial, and readily identifiable financial impact on the  
45 member. An appointed board member shall not vote on a zoning amendment if the landowner  
46 of the property subject to a rezoning petition or the applicant for a text amendment is a person  
47 with whom the member has a close familial, business, or other associational relationship.

48 (c) Administrative Staff. No staff member shall make a final decision on an  
49 administrative decision required by this Chapter if the outcome of that decision would have a  
50 direct, substantial, and readily identifiable financial impact on the staff member or if the  
51 applicant or other person subject to that decision is a person with whom the staff member has a

close familial, business, or other associational relationship. If a staff member has a conflict of interest under this section, the decision shall be assigned to the supervisor of the staff person or such other staff person as may be designated by the ordinance.

No staff member shall be financially interested or employed by a business that is financially interested in a development subject to regulation under this Chapter unless the staff member is the owner of the land or building involved. No staff member or other individual or an employee of a company contracting with a local government to provide staff support shall engage in any work that is inconsistent with his or her duties or with the interest of the local government, as determined by the local government.

(d) Quasi-Judicial Decisions. A member of any board exercising quasi-judicial functions pursuant to this Chapter shall not participate in or vote on any quasi-judicial matter in a manner that would violate affected persons' constitutional rights to an impartial decision maker. Impermissible violations of due process include, but are not limited to, a member having a fixed opinion prior to hearing the matter that is not susceptible to change, undisclosed ex parte communications, a close familial, business, or other associational relationship with an affected person, or a financial interest in the outcome of the matter. If an objection is raised to a member's participation and that member does not recuse himself or herself, the remaining members shall by majority vote rule on the objection.

(e) Familial relationship. For purposes of this section, a close familial relationship means a spouse, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild. The term includes the step, half, and in-law relationships.

**"§ 160D-1-10. Validation of certain city ordinances.**

Any city ordinance regularly adopted prior to January 1, 1972, under authority of general laws revised and reenacted in this Chapter, Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, or under authority of any city charter, or local act is validated with respect to its application within the corporate limits of the city and as to its application within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the city. Such an ordinance, and any city ordinance adopted since January 1, 1972, under authority of general laws revised and reenacted in Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, are hereby validated, notwithstanding the fact that such ordinances were not recorded pursuant to previously effective G.S. 160A-360(b) or G.S. 160A-364 and notwithstanding the fact that the adopting city council did not also adopt an ordinance defining or delineating by specific description the areas within its extraterritorial jurisdiction pursuant to previously effective G.S. 160A-360; provided that this act shall be deemed to validate ordinances of cities in Mecklenburg County only with respect to their application within the corporate limits of such cities.

**"§ 160D-1-11. Construction.**

G.S. 153A-4 and G.S. 160A-4 are applicable to this Chapter.

**"§ 160D-1-12. General laws supplementary.**

G.S. 153A-3 and G.S. 160A-3 are applicable to this Chapter. Nothing in this Chapter repeals or amends a charter or local act in effect as of January 1, 2016, or any portion of such an act, unless this Chapter or a subsequent enactment of the General Assembly clearly shows a legislative intent to repeal or supersede that charter or local act.

**"§ 160D-1-13. References deemed amended to conform to Chapter.**

Whenever a reference is made in another section of the General Statutes or any local act, or any local government ordinance, resolution, or order, to a portion of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes or Article 18 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes that is repealed or superseded by this Chapter, the reference shall be deemed amended to refer to that portion of this Chapter that most nearly corresponds to the repealed or superseded portion of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes or Article 18 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes.

**"§ 160D-1-14. Effect on prior laws.**

1     The enactment of this Chapter shall not require the readoption of any local government  
2     ordinance enacted pursuant to laws that were in effect before July 1, 2016, and are restated or  
3     revised herein. The provisions of this Chapter shall not affect any act heretofore done, any  
4     liability incurred, any right accrued or vested, or any suit or prosecution begun or cause of  
5     action accrued as of July 1, 2016.

6   "Article 2.

7                             "Planning and Development Regulation Jurisdiction.

8     "§ 160D-2-1. Planning and development regulation jurisdiction.

9         (a) All of the powers granted by this Chapter may be exercised by any city within its  
10        corporate limits and within any extraterritorial area established pursuant to G.S. 160D-2.

11        (b) All of the powers granted by this Chapter may be exercised throughout the county  
12        except in areas subject to municipal jurisdiction.

13     "§ 160D-2-2. Municipal extraterritorial jurisdiction.

14        (a) Geographic Scope. Any city may exercise the powers granted to cities under this  
15        Chapter within a defined area extending not more than one mile beyond its contiguous  
16        corporate limits. In addition and subject to subsection (c) of this section, a city of 10,000 or  
17        more population but less than 25,000 may exercise these powers over an area extending not  
18        more than two miles beyond its limits, and a city of 25,000 or more population may exercise  
19        these powers over an area extending not more than three miles beyond its limits. In determining  
20        the population of a city for the purposes of this Chapter, the city council and the board of  
21        county commissioners may use the most recent annual estimate of population as certified by the  
22        Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Administration. Pursuant to G.S. 160A-58.4,  
23        extraterritorial municipal planning and development regulation may be extended only from the  
24        primary corporate boundary of a city and not from the boundary of satellite areas of the city.

25        (b) City Authority in the Extraterritorial Area. A city may not exercise any power  
26        conferred by this Chapter in its extraterritorial jurisdiction that it is not exercising within its  
27        corporate limits. A city shall exercise in its extraterritorial area all powers conferred by this  
28        Chapter that it is exercising within its corporate limits unless a county by mutual agreement has  
29        agreed to exercise those powers in that extraterritorial area.

30        (c) County Approval of City Jurisdiction. No city may extend its extraterritorial powers  
31        into any area for which the county has adopted and is enforcing county zoning and subdivision  
32        regulations. However, the city may do so where the county is not exercising both of these  
33        powers, or when the city and the county have agreed upon the area within which each will  
34        exercise the powers conferred by this Chapter. No city may extend its extraterritorial powers  
35        beyond one mile from its corporate limits without the approval of the board or boards of county  
36        commissioners with jurisdiction over the area.

37        (d) Notice of Proposed Jurisdiction Change. Any municipality proposing to exercise  
38        extraterritorial jurisdiction under this Chapter shall notify the owners of all parcels of land  
39        proposed for addition to the area of extraterritorial jurisdiction, as shown on the county tax  
40        records. The notice shall be sent by first-class mail to the last addresses listed for affected  
41        property owners in the county tax records. The notice shall inform the landowner of the effect  
42        of the extension of extraterritorial jurisdiction, of the landowner's right to participate in a  
43        legislative hearing prior to adoption of any ordinance extending the area of extraterritorial  
44        jurisdiction, as provided in G.S. 160D-6-1, and the right of all residents of the area to apply to  
45        the board of county commissioners to serve as a representative on the planning board and the  
46        board of adjustment, as provided in G.S. 160D-3-3. The notice shall be mailed at least 30 days  
47        prior to the date of the hearing. The person or persons mailing the notices shall certify to the  
48        city council that the notices were sent by first-class mail, and the certificate shall be deemed  
49        conclusive in the absence of fraud.

50        (e) Boundaries. Any council exercising extraterritorial jurisdiction under this Chapter  
51        shall adopt an ordinance specifying the areas to be included based upon existing or projected

1 urban development and areas of critical concern to the city, as evidenced by officially adopted  
2 plans for its development. A single jurisdictional boundary shall be applicable for all powers  
3 conferred in this Chapter. Boundaries shall be defined, to the extent feasible, in terms of  
4 geographical features identifiable on the ground. A council may, in its discretion, exclude from  
5 its extraterritorial jurisdiction areas lying in another county, areas separated from the city by  
6 barriers to urban growth, or areas whose projected development will have minimal impact on  
7 the city. The boundaries specified in the ordinance shall at all times be drawn on a map, set  
8 forth in a written description, or shown by a combination of these techniques. This delineation  
9 shall be maintained in the manner provided in G.S. 160A-22 for the delineation of the corporate  
10 limits and shall be recorded in the office of the register of deeds of each county in which any  
11 portion of the area lies.

12 Where the extraterritorial jurisdiction of two or more cities overlaps, the jurisdictional  
13 boundary between them shall be a line connecting the midway points of the overlapping area  
14 unless the city councils agree to another boundary line within the overlapping area based upon  
15 existing or projected patterns of development.

16 (f) County Authority Within City Jurisdiction. The county may on request of the city  
17 council exercise any or all these powers in any or all areas lying within the city's corporate  
18 limits or within the city's specified area of extraterritorial jurisdiction.

19 (g) Transfer of Jurisdiction. When a city annexes, or a new city is incorporated in, or a  
20 city extends its jurisdiction to include, an area that is currently being regulated by the county,  
21 the county development regulations and powers of enforcement shall remain in effect until (i)  
22 the city has adopted such development regulations, or (ii) a period of 60 days has elapsed  
23 following the annexation, extension, or incorporation, whichever is sooner. Prior to the transfer  
24 of jurisdiction, the city may hold hearings and take any other measures consistent with  
25 G.S. 160D-2-4 that may be required in order to adopt and apply its development regulations for  
26 the area at the same time it assumes jurisdiction.

27 When a city relinquishes jurisdiction over an area that it is regulating under this Chapter to  
28 a county, the city development regulations and powers of enforcement shall remain in effect  
29 until (i) the county has adopted such development regulation, or (ii) a period of 60 days has  
30 elapsed following the action by which the city relinquished jurisdiction, whichever is sooner.  
31 Prior to the transfer of jurisdiction, the county may hold hearings and take other measures  
32 consistent with G.S. 160D-2-4 that may be required in order to adopt and apply its development  
33 regulations for the area at the same time it assumes jurisdiction.

34 (h) Process for Local Government Approval. When a local government is granted  
35 powers by this section subject to the request, approval, or agreement of another local  
36 government, the request, approval, or agreement shall be evidenced by a formally adopted  
37 resolution of the governing board of the local government. Any such request, approval, or  
38 agreement can be rescinded upon two years' written notice to the other governing boards  
39 concerned by repealing the resolution. The resolution may be modified at any time by mutual  
40 agreement of the governing boards concerned.

41 (i) Local Acts. Nothing in this section shall repeal, modify, or amend any local act  
42 which defines the boundaries of a city's extraterritorial jurisdiction by metes and bounds or  
43 courses and distances.

44 (j) Effect on Vested Rights. Whenever a city or county, pursuant to this section,  
45 acquires jurisdiction over a territory that theretofore has been subject to the jurisdiction of  
46 another local government, any person who has acquired vested rights in the surrendering  
47 jurisdiction may exercise those rights as if no change of jurisdiction had occurred. The city or  
48 county acquiring jurisdiction may take any action regarding such a permit, certificate, or other  
49 evidence of compliance that could have been taken by the local government surrendering  
50 jurisdiction pursuant to its ordinances and regulations. Except as provided in this subsection,



any building, structure, or other land use in a territory over which a city or county has acquired jurisdiction is subject to the ordinances and regulations of the city or county.

**"§ 160D-2-3. Split jurisdiction.**

If an individual parcel of land lies within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of more than one local government, for the purposes of this Chapter, the local governments may, by mutual agreement, pursuant to Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes and with the written consent of the landowner, assign exclusive planning and development regulation jurisdiction under this Chapter for the entire parcel to any one of those local governments. Such a mutual agreement shall only be applicable to development regulations and shall not affect taxation or other nonregulatory matters. The mutual agreement shall be evidenced by a resolution formally adopted by each governing board and recorded with the register of deeds in the county where the property is located within 14 days of the adoption of the last required resolution.

**"§ 160D-2-4. Pending jurisdiction.**

After consideration of a change in local government jurisdiction has been formally proposed, the local government that is potentially receiving jurisdiction may receive and process any application for development approvals that would be required in that local government if the jurisdiction is changed. No final decisions shall be made on any development approval prior to the actual transfer of jurisdiction. Acceptance of jurisdiction and development approvals may be made concurrently.

**"Article 3.**

**"Boards and Organizational Arrangements.**

**"§ 160D-3-1. Planning boards.**

(a) Composition. A local government may by ordinance provide for the appointment and compensation of a planning board or may designate one or more boards or commissions to perform the duties of a planning board. A planning board established pursuant to this section may include, but shall not be limited to, one or more of the following:

(1) A planning board of any size (with not fewer than three members) or composition deemed appropriate, organized in any manner deemed appropriate.

(2) A joint planning board created by two or more local governments pursuant to Part 1 of Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes.

(b) Duties. A planning board may be assigned the following powers and duties:

(1) Prepare, review, maintain, monitor, and periodically update and recommend to the governing board a comprehensive plan, and such other plans as deemed appropriate, and conduct ongoing related research, data collection, mapping, and analysis.

(2) Facilitate and coordinate citizen engagement and participation in the planning process.

(3) Develop and recommend policies, ordinances, administrative procedures, and other means for carrying out plans in a coordinated and efficient manner.

(4) Advise the governing board concerning the implementation of plans, including, but not limited to, review and comment on all zoning text and map amendments as required by G.S. 160D-6-4.

(5) Exercise any functions in the administration and enforcement of various means for carrying out plans that the governing board may direct.

(6) Provide a preliminary forum for review of quasi-judicial decisions, provided that no part of the forum or recommendation be used as a basis for the deciding board.

(7) Perform any other related duties that the governing board may direct.

1 **"§ 160D-3-2. Boards of adjustment.**

2 (a) Composition. A local government may by ordinance provide for the appointment  
3 and compensation of a board of adjustment consisting of five or more members, each to be  
4 appointed for three years. In appointing the original members or in the filling of vacancies  
5 caused by the expiration of the terms of existing members, the governing board may appoint  
6 certain members for less than three years so that the terms of all members shall not expire at  
7 the same time. The governing board may appoint and provide compensation for alternate  
8 members to serve on the board in the absence or temporary disqualification of any regular  
9 member or to fill a vacancy pending appointment of a member. Alternate members shall be  
10 appointed for the same term, at the same time, and in the same manner as regular members.  
11 Each alternate member serving on behalf of any regular member has all the powers and duties  
12 of a regular member.

13 (b) Duties. The board shall hear and decide all matters upon which it is required to pass  
14 under any statute or ordinance adopted under this Chapter. The ordinance may designate a  
15 planning board or governing board to perform any of the duties of a board of adjustment  
16 in addition to its other duties and may create and designate specialized boards to hear  
17 technical appeals. If any board other than the board of adjustment is assigned decision-making  
18 authority for any quasi-judicial matter, that board shall comply with all of the procedures and  
19 the process applicable to a board of adjustment in making quasi-judicial decisions.

20 **"§ 160D-3-3. Extraterritorial representation on planning boards and boards of**  
21 **adjustment.**

22 (a) Proportional Representation. When a city elects to exercise extraterritorial powers  
23 under this Chapter, it shall provide a means of proportional representation based on population  
24 for residents of the extraterritorial area to be regulated. The population estimates for this  
25 calculation shall be updated no less frequently than after each decennial census. Representation  
26 shall be provided by appointing at least one resident of the entire extraterritorial planning and  
27 development regulation area to the planning board, the board of adjustment, and appearance  
28 commission.

29 (b) Appointment. Membership of joint municipal-county planning agencies or boards of  
30 adjustment may be appointed as agreed by counties and municipalities. The extraterritorial  
31 representatives on a city planning board, board of adjustment, and appearance commission shall  
32 be appointed by the board of county commissioners with jurisdiction over the area. When  
33 selecting a new representative to the planning board or to the board of adjustment as a result of  
34 an extension of the extraterritorial jurisdiction of a city, the board of county commissioners  
35 shall hold a legislative hearing on the selection. A notice of the hearing shall be given once a  
36 week for two successive calendar weeks in a newspaper having general circulation in the area.  
37 The board of county commissioners shall select appointees only from those who apply at or  
38 before the hearing. The county shall make the appointments within 90 days following the  
39 hearing. Once a city provides proportional representation, no power available to a city under  
40 this Chapter shall be ineffective in its extraterritorial area solely because county appointments  
41 have not yet been made. If there is an insufficient number of qualified residents of the  
42 extraterritorial area to meet membership requirements, the board of county commissioners may  
43 appoint as many other residents of the county as necessary to make up the requisite number.  
44 When the extraterritorial area extends into two or more counties, each board of county  
45 commissioners concerned shall appoint representatives from its portion of the area, as specified  
46 in the ordinance. If a board of county commissioners fails to make these appointments within  
47 90 days after receiving a resolution from the city council requesting that they be made, the city  
48 council may make them.

49 (c) Voting Rights. If the ordinance so provides, the outside representatives may have  
50 equal rights, privileges, and duties with the other members of the board to which they are  
51 appointed, regardless of whether the matters at issue arise within the city or within the

extraterritorial area; otherwise they shall function only with respect to matters within the extraterritorial area.

**"§ 160D-3-4. Historic preservation commission.**

(a) Composition. Before it may designate one or more landmarks or historic districts pursuant to Part 4 of Article 9 of this Chapter, the governing board shall establish a historic preservation commission. The governing board shall determine the number of the members of the commission, which shall be at least three, and the length of their terms, which shall be no greater than four years. A majority of the members of such a commission shall have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in history, architecture, archaeology, or related fields. All the members shall reside within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of the local government as established pursuant to this Chapter. The commission may appoint advisory bodies and committees as appropriate. Members of the commission may be reimbursed for actual expenses incidental to the performance of their duties within the limits of any funds available to the commission but shall serve without pay unless otherwise provided in the ordinance establishing the commission.

In lieu of establishing a historic preservation commission, a local government may designate as its historic preservation commission (i) a separate historic districts commission or a separate historic landmarks commission established pursuant to this Chapter to deal only with historic districts or landmarks respectively, (ii) a planning board established pursuant to this Chapter, or (iii) a community appearance commission established pursuant to this Chapter. In order for a commission or board other than the preservation commission to be designated, at least three of its members shall have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in history, architecture, or related fields. At the discretion of the local government the ordinance may also provide that the preservation commission may exercise within a historic district any or all of the powers of a planning board or a community appearance commission.

Local governments may establish or designate a joint preservation commission. If a joint commission is established or designated, it shall have the same composition as specified by this section and the local governments involved shall determine the residence requirements of members of the joint preservation commission.

(b) Duties. The historic preservation commission shall have the duties specified in G.S. 160D-9-42.

**"§ 160D-3-5. Appearance commission.**

(a) Composition. Each local government may by ordinance create a special commission, to be known as the appearance commission. The commission shall consist of not less than seven nor more than 15 members, to be appointed by the governing board for such terms, not to exceed four years, as the governing board may by ordinance provide. All members shall be residents of the local government's area of planning and development regulation jurisdiction at the time of appointment. Where possible, appointments shall be made in such a manner as to maintain on the commission at all times a majority of members who have had special training or experience in a design field, such as architecture, landscape design, horticulture, city planning, or a related field. Members of the commission may be reimbursed for actual expenses incidental to the performance of their duties within the limits of any funds available to the commission, but shall serve without pay unless otherwise provided in the ordinance establishing the commission. Membership of the commission is an office that may be held concurrently with any other elective or appointive office pursuant to Article VI, Sec. 9, of the Constitution.

Local governments may establish a joint appearance commission. If a joint appearance commission is established, it shall have the same composition as specified by this section, and the local governments involved shall determine the residence requirements for members of the joint appearance commission.

(b) Duties. The community appearance commission shall have the duties specified in G.S. 160D-9-60.

**"§ 160D-3-6. Housing appeals board.**

(a) Composition. The governing board may by ordinance provide for the creation and organization of a housing appeals board. Instead of establishing a housing appeals board, a local government may designate the board of adjustment as its housing appeals board. The housing appeals board, if created, shall consist of five members to serve for three-year staggered terms.

(b) Duties. The housing appeals board shall have the duties specified in G.S. 160D-12-8.

**"§ 160D-3-7. Other advisory boards.**

A local government may by ordinance establish additional advisory boards as deemed appropriate. The ordinance establishing such boards shall specify the composition and duties of such boards.

**"§ 160D-3-8. Rules of procedure.**

Rules of procedure that are consistent with the provisions of this Chapter may be adopted by the governing board for any or all boards created under this Article. In the absence of action by the governing board, each board created under this Article is authorized to adopt its own rules of procedure that are consistent with the provisions of this Chapter. A copy of any adopted rules of procedure shall be maintained by the local government clerk and posted on the local government Web site if one exists. Each board shall keep minutes of its proceedings.

**"§ 160D-3-9. Oath of office.**

All members appointed to boards under this Article shall, before entering their duties, qualify by taking an oath of office as required by G.S. 153A-26 and G.S. 160A-61.

"Article 4.

"Administration, Enforcement, and Appeals.

**"§ 160D-4-1. Application.**

(a) The provisions of this Article shall apply to all ordinances adopted pursuant to this Chapter. Local governments may apply any of the definitions and procedures authorized by this Article to ordinances adopted under the general police power of cities and counties, Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes and Article 6 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes, respectively, and may employ any organizational structure, board, commission, or staffing arrangement authorized by this Article to any or all aspects of those ordinances.

(b) The provisions of this Article are supplemental to specific provisions included in other Articles of this Chapter. To the extent there is a conflict between the provisions of this Article and other Articles, the more specific provision shall control.

**"§ 160D-4-2. Administrative staff.**

(a) Authorization. Local governments may appoint administrators, inspectors, enforcement officers, planners, technicians, and other staff to develop, administer, and enforce ordinances authorized by this Chapter.

(b) Duties. Duties assigned to staff may include, but are not limited to: drafting and implementing plans and ordinances to be adopted pursuant to this Chapter; determining whether permit applications are complete; receipt and processing applications for permits; providing notices of applications and hearings; making permit decisions and determinations regarding ordinance implementation; determining whether permit applications meet applicable standards as established by law and local ordinance; conducting inspections; issuing or denying certificates of compliance or occupancy; enforcing ordinances, including issuing notices of violation and orders to correct violations and bringing judicial actions against actual or threatened violations; keeping adequate records; and any other actions that may be required in order adequately to enforce the laws and development regulations under their jurisdiction. A development regulation may require that designated staff members take an oath of office. The

1 local government shall have the authority to enact ordinances, procedures, and fee schedules  
2 relating to the administration and the enforcement of this Chapter. The administrative and  
3 enforcement provisions related to building permits set forth in Article 11 shall be followed for  
4 those permits.

5 (c) Alternative Staff Arrangements. A local government may enter into contracts with  
6 another city, county, or combination thereof under which the parties agree to create a joint staff  
7 for the enforcement of State and local laws specified in the agreement. The governing boards of  
8 the contracting parties may make any necessary appropriations for this purpose.

9 In lieu of joint staff, a governing board may designate staff from any other city or county to  
10 serve as a member of its staff with the approval of the governing board of the other city or  
11 county. A staff member if designated from another city or county under this section, shall,  
12 while exercising the duties of the position, be considered an agent of the local government. The  
13 governing board of one local government may request the governing board of a second local  
14 government to direct one or more of the second local government's staff members to exercise  
15 their powers within part or all of the first local government's jurisdiction, and they shall  
16 thereupon be empowered to do so until the first local government officially withdraws its  
17 request in the manner provided in G.S. 160D-2-2.

18 A local government may contract with an individual, company, council of governments,  
19 regional planning agency, metropolitan planning organization, or rural planning agency to  
20 designate an individual who is not a city or county employee to work under the supervision of  
21 the local government to exercise the functions authorized by this section. The local government  
22 shall have the same potential liability, if any, for inspections conducted by an individual who is  
23 not an employee of the local government as it does for an individual who is an employee of the  
24 local government. The company or individual with whom the local government contracts shall  
25 have errors and omissions and other insurance coverage acceptable to the local government.

26 (d) Financial Support. The local government may appropriate for the support of the  
27 staff any funds that it deems necessary. It shall have power to fix reasonable fees for issuance  
28 of permits, inspections, and other services of the staff.

29 **"§ 160D-4-3. Permits and determinations.**

30 (a) Permits. No person shall commence or proceed with the construction,  
31 reconstruction, alteration, repair, movement to another site, removal, or demolition of any  
32 building or structure or initiate or change the use of land without first securing any required  
33 permits, site plan, or development approvals from the local government with jurisdiction over  
34 the site of the development. The developer shall secure all permits required by any State or  
35 local laws applicable to the development prior to the initiation of work. A permit shall be in  
36 writing and shall contain a provision that the development shall comply with all applicable  
37 State and local laws. A local government may issue permits in print or electronic form. Any  
38 permit issued exclusively in electronic form shall be locked from further editing once issued.  
39 Applications for permits and development approvals may be made by the landowner, a lessee  
40 or person holding an option or contract to purchase that land, or an authorized agent of the  
41 landowner.

42 (b) Determinations and Notice of Determinations. An ordinance enacted under the  
43 authority of this Chapter shall designate the staff member or members charged with making  
44 decisions under the ordinance. As used in this Article, "decision" includes any final and binding  
45 order, requirement, or determination.

46 The officer making the decision shall give written notice to the owner of the property that is  
47 the subject of the decision, to the party who sought the decision, if different from the owner,  
48 and to any known tenant subject to the decision. The written notice shall clearly indicate that it  
49 is final and binding and shall be delivered by personal delivery, electronic mail, or by first-class  
50 mail.



1 It shall be conclusively presumed that all persons with standing to appeal have constructive  
2 notice of the decision from the date a sign providing notice that a decision has been made is  
3 prominently posted on the property that is the subject of the decision, provided the sign remains  
4 on the property for at least 10 days. The sign shall contain the words "Zoning Decision" or  
5 "Subdivision Decision" or similar language for other determinations in letters at least six inches  
6 high and shall identify the means to contact a local government staff member for information  
7 about the decision. Posting of signs is not the only form of constructive notice. Any such  
8 posting shall be the responsibility of the landowner, applicant, or person who sought the  
9 decision. Verification of the posting shall be provided to the staff member responsible for the  
10 decision. Absent an ordinance provision to the contrary, posting of signs shall not be required.

11 (c) Duration of Development Approval. Unless a different period is specified by this  
12 Chapter or other specific applicable law or a longer period is provided by local ordinance, a  
13 development approval issued pursuant to this Chapter shall expire one year after the date of  
14 issuance if the work or activity authorized by the development approval has not been  
15 substantially commenced. Local ordinances may provide for development approvals of shorter  
16 duration for temporary land uses, special events, temporary signs, and similar development.  
17 Unless provided otherwise by this Chapter or other specific applicable law or a longer period is  
18 provided by local ordinance, if the work or activity is discontinued for a period of 12 months  
19 after commencement, the development approval shall immediately expire. The time periods set  
20 out in this subsection shall be tolled during the pendency of any appeal. No work or activity  
21 authorized by any development approval that has expired shall thereafter be performed until a  
22 new development approval has been secured.

23 (d) Changes. After a development approval has been issued, no deviations from the  
24 terms of the application or the development approval shall be made until written approval of  
25 proposed changes or deviations has been obtained. A local government may define by  
26 ordinance minor modifications to development approvals that can be exempted or  
27 administratively approved. The local government shall follow the same development review  
28 and approval process required for issuance of the development approval in the review and  
29 approval of any major modification of that approval.

30 (e) Inspections. Administrative staff may inspect work undertaken pursuant to a  
31 development approval to assure that the work is being done in accordance with applicable State  
32 and local laws and of the terms of the approval. In exercising this power, staff are authorized to  
33 enter any premises within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of the local  
34 government at all reasonable hours for the purposes of inspection or other enforcement action,  
35 upon presentation of proper credentials to the extent constitutionally permissible.

36 (f) Revocation of Development Approvals. Development approvals may be revoked by  
37 the local government issuing the development approval by notifying the holder in writing  
38 stating the reason for the revocation. The local government shall follow the same development  
39 review and approval process required for issuance of the development approval, including any  
40 required notice or hearing, in the review and approval of any revocation of that approval.  
41 Development approvals shall be revoked for any substantial departure from the approved  
42 application, plans, or specifications; for refusal or failure to comply with the requirements of  
43 any applicable local development regulation or any State law enforced by the local  
44 government; or for false statements or misrepresentations made in securing the approval. Any  
45 development approval mistakenly issued in violation of an applicable State or local law may  
46 also be revoked. The revocation of a development approval by a staff member may be appealed  
47 pursuant to G.S. 160D-4-5. If an appeal is filed regarding an ordinance adopted by a local  
48 government pursuant to this Chapter, the provisions of G.S. 160D-4-5(e) regarding stays shall  
49 be applicable.

50 (g) Certificate of Occupancy. A local government may, upon completion of work or  
51 activity undertaken pursuant to a development approval, make final inspections and issue a

certificate of compliance or occupancy if staff finds that the completed work complies with all applicable State and local laws and with the terms of the approval. No building, structure, or use of land that is subject to a building permit required by Article 11 of this Chapter shall be occupied or used until a certificate of occupancy or temporary certificate pursuant to G.S. 160D-11-14 has been issued.

**"§ 160D-4-4. Enforcement.**

(a) Notices of Violation. When staff determines work or activity has been undertaken in violation of an ordinance adopted pursuant to this Chapter or other local development regulation or any State law enforced by the local government or in violation of the terms of a development approval, a written notice of violation may be issued. The notice of violation shall be delivered to the holder of the development approval and to the landowner of the property involved if the landowner is not the holder of the development approval, by personal delivery, electronic delivery, or first-class mail and may be provided by similar means to the occupant of the property or the person undertaking the work or activity. The notice of violation may be posted on the property. The person providing the notice of violation shall certify to the local government that the notice was provided, and the certificate shall be deemed conclusive in the absence of fraud. Except as provided by G.S. 160D-11-23, G.S. 160D-12-6, or otherwise provided by law, a notice of violation may be appealed to the board of adjustment pursuant to G.S. 160D-4-5.

(b) Stop Work Orders. Whenever any work or activity subject to regulation pursuant to this Chapter or other applicable local development regulation or any State law enforced by the local government is undertaken in substantial violation of any State or local law, or in a manner that endangers life or property, staff may order the specific part of the work or activity that is in violation, or presents such a hazard, to be immediately stopped. The order shall be in writing, directed to the person doing the work or activity, and shall state the specific work or activity to be stopped, the reasons therefor, and the conditions under which the work or activity may be resumed. A copy of the order shall be delivered to the holder of the development approval and to the owner of the property involved if that person is not the holder of the development approval, by personal delivery, electronic delivery, or first-class mail. The person or persons delivering the stop work order shall certify to the local government that the order was delivered, and that certificate shall be deemed conclusive in the absence of fraud. Except as provided by G.S. 160D-11-23 and G.S. 160D-12-6, a stop work order may be appealed pursuant to G.S. 160D-4-5. No further work or activity shall take place in violation of a stop work order pending a ruling on the appeal. Violation of a stop work order shall constitute a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(c) Remedies. Subject to the provisions of the ordinance, any ordinance adopted pursuant to authority conferred by this Chapter may be enforced by any remedy provided by G.S. 160A-175 or G.S. 153A-123. If a building or structure is erected, constructed, reconstructed, altered, repaired, converted, or maintained, or any building, structure or land is used or developed in violation of this Chapter or of any ordinance or other regulation made under authority of this Chapter, the local government, in addition to other remedies, may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent the unlawful erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, conversion, maintenance, use, or development; to restrain, correct, or abate the violation; to prevent occupancy of the building, structure, or land; or to prevent any illegal act, conduct, business, or use in or about the premises.

In case any building, structure, site, area, or object designated as a historic landmark or located within a historic district designated pursuant to this Chapter is about to be demolished whether as the result of deliberate neglect or otherwise, materially altered, remodeled, removed, or destroyed, except in compliance with the ordinance or other provisions of this Chapter, the local government, the historic preservation commission, or other party aggrieved by such action may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent such unlawful demolition,

destruction, material alteration, remodeling, or removal, to restrain, correct or abate such violation, or to prevent any illegal act or conduct with respect to such building, structure, site, area, or object. Such remedies shall be in addition to any others authorized by this Chapter for violation of an ordinance.

**"§ 160D-4-5. Appeals of administrative decisions.**

(a) Appeals. Except as provided in subsection (b), appeals of decisions made by the staff under this Chapter shall be made to the board of adjustment unless a different board is provided or authorized otherwise by statute or an ordinance adopted pursuant to this Chapter. If this function of the board of adjustment is assigned to any other board pursuant to G.S. 160D-3-2(b), that board shall comply with all of the procedures and processes applicable to a board of adjustment hearing appeals. Appeal of a decision made pursuant to an erosion and sedimentation control ordinance, a stormwater control ordinance, or a provision of the housing code shall not be made to the board of adjustment unless required by a local government ordinance or code provision.

(b) Judicial Appeals. A party with standing is not required to exhaust the remedy in subsection (a) of this section before bringing a separate original civil action to challenge the validity of an ordinance or regulation or to raise constitutional claims.

(c) Standing. Any person who has standing under G.S. 160D-14-2 or the local government may appeal an administrative decision to the board. An appeal is taken by filing a notice of appeal with the local government clerk or such other government official as may be designated by the ordinance. The notice of appeal shall state the grounds for the appeal.

(d) Time to Appeal. The landowner or other party shall have 30 days from receipt of the written notice of the decision within which to file an appeal. Any other person with standing to appeal shall have 30 days from receipt from any source of actual or constructive notice of the decision within which to file an appeal. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, notice given by first-class mail shall be deemed received on the third business day following deposit of the notice for mailing with the United States Post Office.

(e) Record of Decision. The official who made the decision shall transmit to the board all documents and exhibits constituting the record upon which the decision appealed from is taken. The official shall also provide a copy of the record to the appellant and to the owner of the property that is the subject of the appeal if the appellant is not the owner.

(f) Stays. An appeal of a notice of violation or other enforcement order stays enforcement of the action appealed from unless the official who made the decision certifies to the board after notice of appeal has been filed that because of the facts stated in an affidavit, a stay would cause imminent peril to life or property or because the violation is transitory in nature, a stay would seriously interfere with enforcement of the ordinance. In that case, enforcement proceedings shall not be stayed except by a restraining order, which may be granted by a court. If enforcement proceedings are not stayed, the appellant may file with the official a request for an expedited hearing of the appeal, and the board shall meet to hear the appeal within 15 days after such a request is filed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, appeals of decisions granting a development approval or otherwise affirming that a proposed use of property is consistent with the ordinance shall not stay the further review of an application for development approval to use such property; in these situations the appellant or local government may request and the board may grant a stay of a final decision of development approval applications, including building permits affected by the issue being appealed.

(g) Alternative Dispute Resolution. The parties to an appeal that has been made under this section may agree to mediation or other forms of alternative dispute resolution. The ordinance may set standards and procedures to facilitate and manage such voluntary alternative dispute resolution.

**"§ 160D-4-6. Quasi-judicial procedure.**

1       (a) Process Required. Quasi-judicial procedures shall be followed by boards  
2 determining appeals of administrative decisions, special use permits, certificates of  
3 appropriateness, variances, or any other quasi-judicial decision.

4       (b) Notice of Hearing. Notice of evidentiary hearings conducted pursuant to this  
5 Chapter shall be mailed to the person or entity whose appeal, application, or request is the  
6 subject of the hearing; to the owner of the property that is the subject of the hearing if the  
7 owner did not initiate the hearing; to the owners of all parcels of land abutting the parcel of  
8 land that is the subject of the hearing; and to any other persons entitled to receive notice as  
9 provided by the local development regulation. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the  
10 local government may rely on the county tax listing to determine owners of property entitled to  
11 mailed notice. The notice must be deposited in the mail at least 10 days, but not more than 25  
12 days, prior to the date of the hearing. Within that same time period, the local government shall  
13 also prominently post a notice of the hearing on the site that is the subject of the hearing or on  
14 an adjacent street or highway right-of-way.

15       (c) Administrative Materials. The administrator or staff to the board shall transmit to  
16 the board all applications, reports, and written materials relevant to the quasi-judicial matter  
17 being considered. The administrative materials may be distributed to the members of the board  
18 prior to the hearing if at the same time they are distributed to the board a copy is also provided  
19 to the appellant or applicant and to the landowner if that person is not the appellant or  
20 applicant. The administrative materials shall become a part of the hearing record. The  
21 administrative materials may be provided in written or electronic form. Any objections to  
22 inclusion or exclusion of administrative materials shall be made at the hearing.

23       (d) Presentation of Evidence. The applicant, the local government, and any person who  
24 would have standing to appeal the decision under G.S. 160D-14-2(d) shall have the right to  
25 present evidence and participate as a party at the evidentiary hearing. Objections regarding  
26 jurisdictional issues, including but not limited to, the timeliness of an appeal or the standing of  
27 a party, may be made to the board. The board shall determine such objections, and these rulings  
28 are subject to judicial review pursuant to G.S. 160D-14-2. Objections based on jurisdictional  
29 issues may be raised for the first time on judicial review.

30       (e) Appearance of Official, New Issues. The official who made the decision, or the  
31 person currently occupying that position if the decision-maker is no longer employed by the  
32 local government, shall be present at the evidentiary hearing as a witness. The board shall not  
33 be limited at the hearing to matters stated in a notice of appeal. If any party or the local  
34 government would be unduly prejudiced by the presentation of matters not presented in the  
35 notice of appeal, the board shall continue the hearing.

36       (f) Oaths. The chair of the board or any member acting as chair and the clerk to the  
37 board are authorized to administer oaths to witnesses in any matter coming before the board.  
38 Any person who, while under oath during a proceeding before the board determining a  
39 quasi-judicial matter, willfully swears falsely is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

40       (g) Subpoenas. The board making a quasi-judicial decision under this Chapter through  
41 the chair, or in the chair's absence anyone acting as chair, may subpoena witnesses and compel  
42 the production of evidence. To request issuance of a subpoena, persons with standing under  
43 G.S. 160D-14-2(d) may make a written request to the chair explaining why it is necessary for  
44 certain witnesses or evidence to be compelled. The chair shall issue requested subpoenas he or  
45 she determines to be relevant, reasonable in nature and scope, and not oppressive. The chair  
46 shall rule on any motion to quash or modify a subpoena. Decisions regarding subpoenas made  
47 by the chair may be immediately appealed to the full board. If a person fails or refuses to obey  
48 a subpoena issued pursuant to this subsection, the board or the party seeking the subpoena may  
49 apply to the General Court of Justice for an order requiring that its subpoena be obeyed, and the  
50 court shall have jurisdiction to issue these orders after notice to all proper parties.

(h) Appeals in Nature of Certiorari. When hearing an appeal pursuant to G.S. 160D-9-47(e) or any other appeal in the nature of certiorari, the hearing shall be based on the record below and the scope of review shall be as provided in G.S. 160D-14-2(k).

(i) Voting. The concurring vote of four-fifths of the board shall be necessary to grant a variance. A majority of the members shall be required to decide any other quasi-judicial matter or to determine an appeal made in the nature of certiorari. For the purposes of this subsection, vacant positions on the board and members who are disqualified from voting on a quasi-judicial matter under G.S. 160D-1-9(d) shall not be considered members of the board for calculation of the requisite majority if there are no qualified alternates available to take the place of such members.

(j) Decisions. The board shall determine contested facts and make its decision within a reasonable time. When hearing an appeal, the board may reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify the decision appealed from and shall make any order, requirement, decision, or determination that ought to be made. The board shall have all the powers of the official who made the decision. Every quasi-judicial decision shall be based upon competent, material, and substantial evidence in the record. Each quasi-judicial decision shall be reduced to writing, reflect the board's determination of contested facts and their application to the applicable standards, and be approved by the board and signed by the chair or other duly authorized member of the board. A quasi-judicial decision is effective upon filing the written decision with the clerk to the board or such other office or official as the ordinance specifies. The decision of the board shall be delivered within a reasonable time by personal delivery, electronic mail, or by first-class mail to the applicant, property owner, and to any person who has submitted a written request for a copy prior to the date the decision becomes effective. The person required to provide notice shall certify to the local government that proper notice has been made, and the certificate shall be deemed conclusive in the absence of fraud.

(k) Judicial Review. Every quasi-judicial decision shall be subject to review by the superior court by proceedings in the nature of certiorari pursuant to G.S. 160D-14-2. Appeals shall be filed within the times specified in G.S. 160D-14-5(d).

"Article 5.

"Planning.

#### "§ 160D-5-1. Plans.

(a) Preparation Of Plans And Studies. As a condition of adopting and applying zoning regulations under this Chapter, a local government shall adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan that sets forth goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development.

A comprehensive plan is intended to guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction based on an analysis of present and future needs. Planning analysis may address inventories of existing conditions and assess future trends regarding demographics, economic, environmental, and cultural factors. The planning process shall include opportunities for citizen engagement in plan preparation and adoption.

(b) Contents. A comprehensive plan may among other topics address any of the following:

- (1) Issues and opportunities facing the local government, including consideration of trends, the values expressed by citizens, community vision, and guiding principles for growth and development.
- (2) The pattern of desired growth and development and civic design, including the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land uses, urban form, utilities, and transportation networks.
- (3) Employment opportunities, economic development, and community development.



- (4) Acceptable levels of public services and infrastructure to support development, including water, waste disposal, utilities, emergency services, transportation, education, recreation, community facilities, and other public services, including plans and policies for provision of and financing for public infrastructure.
- (5) Housing with a range of types and affordability to accommodate persons and households of all types and income levels.
- (6) Recreation and open spaces.
- (7) Mitigation of natural hazards such as flooding, winds, wildfires, and unstable lands.
- (8) Protection of the environment and natural resources, including agricultural resources, mineral resources, and water and air quality.
- (9) Protection of significant architectural, scenic, cultural, historical, or archaeological resources.
- (10) Analysis and evaluation of implementation measures, including regulations, public investments, and educational programs.

(c) Adoption and Effect of Plans. Plans shall be adopted by the governing board with the advice and consultation of the planning board. Adoption and amendment of a comprehensive plan shall follow the process mandated for zoning text amendments set by G.S. 160D-6-1. Plans adopted under this Chapter shall be advisory in nature without independent regulatory effect. Plans adopted under this Chapter may be undertaken and adopted as part of or in conjunction with plans required under other statutes, including, but not limited to, the plans required by G.S. 113A-110. Plans adopted under this Chapter shall be advisory in nature without independent regulatory effect. Plans adopted pursuant to this section shall be considered by the planning board and governing board when considering proposed amendments to zoning ordinances as required by G.S. 160D-6-4 and G.S. 160D-6-5.

**"§ 160D-5-2. Grants, contracts, and technical assistance.**

(a) Grants and Services. A local government may accept, receive, and disburse in furtherance of its functions any funds, grants, and services made available by the federal government and its agencies, the State government and its agencies, any local government and its agencies, and any private and civic sources. A local government may enter into and carry out contracts with the State and federal governments or any agencies thereof under which financial or other planning assistance is made available to the local government and may agree to and comply with any reasonable conditions that are imposed upon such assistance.

(b) Contracts. Any local government may enter into and carry out contracts with any other city, county, regional council, planning agency, or private consultant under which it agrees to furnish technical planning assistance to the other local government or planning agency. Any local government may enter into and carry out contracts with any other city, county, or regional council or planning agency under which it agrees to pay the other local government for technical planning assistance.

(c) Appropriations, Compensation, and Financing. A local government is authorized to make appropriations that may be necessary to carry out activities or contracts authorized by this Article or to support, and compensate members of any board that it may create pursuant to this Chapter, and to levy taxes for these purposes as a necessary expense.

**"§ 160D-5-3. Coordination of planning.**

A local government may undertake any of the planning activities authorized by this Article in coordination with other local governments, State agencies, or regional agencies created under Article 19 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes or Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes.

"Article 6.

"Process for Adoption of Development Regulations.

1 **"§ 160D-6-1. Procedure for adopting, amending, or repealing ordinances.**

2 (a) Hearing with Published Notice. Before adopting, amending, or repealing any  
3 ordinance authorized by this Chapter, the governing board shall hold a legislative hearing. A  
4 notice of the hearing shall be given once a week for two successive calendar weeks in a  
5 newspaper having general circulation in the area. The notice shall be published the first time  
6 not less than 10 days nor more than 25 days before the date scheduled for the hearing. In  
7 computing such period, the day of publication is not to be included but the day of the hearing  
8 shall be included.

9 (b) Notice to Military Bases. If the adoption or modification of the ordinance would  
10 result in changes to the zoning map or would change or affect the permitted uses of land  
11 located five miles or less from the perimeter boundary of a military base, the local government  
12 shall provide written notice of the proposed changes by certified mail, return receipt requested,  
13 to the commander of the military base not less than 10 days nor more than 25 days before the  
14 date scheduled for the hearing. If the military provides comments or analysis regarding the  
15 compatibility of the proposed ordinance or amendment with military operations at the base, the  
16 governing board of the local government shall take the comments and analysis into  
17 consideration before making a final determination on the ordinance.

18 **"§ 160D-6-2. Notice of hearing on proposed zoning map amendments.**

19 (a) Mailed Notice. The ordinance shall provide for the manner in which zoning  
20 regulations and the boundaries of zoning districts shall be determined, established, and  
21 enforced, and from time to time amended, supplemented, or changed, in accordance with the  
22 provisions of this Chapter. The procedures adopted pursuant to this section shall provide that  
23 whenever there is a zoning map amendment, the owner of that parcel of land, and the owners of  
24 all parcels of land abutting that parcel of land, shall be mailed a notice of the legislative hearing  
25 on the proposed amendment by first-class mail at the last addresses listed for such owners on  
26 the county tax abstracts. This notice must be deposited in the mail at least 10 days but not more  
27 than 25 days prior to the date of the hearing. If the zoning map amendment is being proposed in  
28 conjunction with an expansion of municipal extraterritorial planning and development  
29 regulation jurisdiction under G.S. 160D-2-2, a single hearing on the zoning map amendment  
30 and the boundary amendment may be held. In this instance the initial notice of the zoning map  
31 amendment hearing may be combined with the boundary hearing notice and the combined  
32 hearing notice mailed at least 30 days prior to the hearing.

33 Except for a government-initiated zoning map amendment, when an application is filed to  
34 request a zoning map amendment and that application is not made by the landowner or  
35 authorized agent, the applicant shall certify to the local government that the owner of the parcel  
36 of land as shown on the county tax listing has received actual notice of the proposed  
37 amendment and a copy of the notice of the hearing. Actual notice shall be provided in any  
38 manner permitted under G.S. 1A-1, Rule 4(j). If notice cannot with due diligence be achieved  
39 by personal delivery, certified mail, or by a designated delivery service authorized pursuant to  
40 26 U.S.C. § 7502(f)(2), notice may be given by publication consistent with G.S. 1A-1, Rule  
41 4(j1). The person or persons required to provide notice shall certify to the local government that  
42 actual notice has been provided, and such certificate shall be deemed conclusive in the absence  
43 of fraud.

44 (b) Option for Large-Scale Zoning Map Amendments. The first-class mail notice  
45 required under subsection (a) of this section shall not be required if the zoning map amendment  
46 directly affects more than 50 properties, owned by at least 50 different property owners, and the  
47 local government elects to use the expanded published notice provided for in this subsection. In  
48 this instance, a local government may elect to make the mailed notice provided for in  
49 subsection (a) of this section, or as an alternative, elect to publish notice of the hearing as  
50 required by G.S. 160D-6-1, provided that each advertisement shall not be less than one-half of  
51 a newspaper page in size. The advertisement shall only be effective for property owners who

reside in the area of general circulation of the newspaper which publishes the notice. Property owners who reside outside of the newspaper circulation area, according to the address listed on the most recent property tax listing for the affected property, shall be notified according to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Posted Notice. When a zoning map amendment is proposed, the local government shall prominently post a notice of the hearing on the site proposed for the amendment or on an adjacent public street or highway right-of-way. When multiple parcels are included within a proposed zoning map amendment, a posting on each individual parcel is not required, but the local government shall post sufficient notices to provide reasonable notice to interested persons.

(d) Optional Communication Requirements. When a zoning map amendment is proposed, a zoning regulation may require communication by the person proposing the map amendment to neighboring landowners and residents and may require the person proposing the zoning map amendment to report on any meeting with neighboring landowners and residents.

**"§ 160D-6.3. Protest petitions for proposed municipal zoning map amendments.**

(a) Protests to Zoning Map Amendments. In case of a qualified protest against a city zoning map amendment within a city's planning and development regulation jurisdiction, that amendment shall not become effective except by favorable vote of three-fourths of all the members of the city's governing board. For the purposes of this subsection, vacant positions on the governing board and members who are excused from voting under G.S. 160D-1-9 shall not be considered "members of the governing board" for calculation of the requisite supermajority.

(b) Qualifying Area. To qualify as a protest under this section, the petition must be signed by the landowners of either (i) twenty percent (20%) or more of the area included in the proposed change or (ii) five percent (5%) of a 100-foot-wide buffer extending along the entire boundary of each discrete or separate area proposed to be rezoned. A street right-of-way shall not be considered in computing the 100-foot buffer area as long as that street right-of-way is 100 feet wide or less. When less than an entire parcel of land is subject to the proposed zoning map amendment, the 100-foot buffer shall be measured from the property line of that parcel.

(c) Amendments Not Subject to Protest. The foregoing provisions concerning protests shall not be applicable to any amendment which initially zones property added to the territorial coverage of the ordinance as a result of annexation or otherwise, or to an amendment to an adopted conditional district if the amendment does not change the types of uses that are permitted within the district or increase the approved density for residential development, or increase the total approved size of nonresidential development, or reduce the size of any buffers or screening approved for the conditional district.

(d) Procedure for Protests. No protest against any amendment to a zoning map shall be valid under this section unless it:

- (1) Is in writing;
- (2) Is signed by the landowners of the qualifying properties;
- (3) States that it protests the proposed zoning map amendment; and
- (4) Is filed with the city clerk in sufficient time to allow the city at least two normal work days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, before the date of the first legislative hearing on the proposed amendment to determine the sufficiency and accuracy of the petition.

When property is owned by multiple persons, a corporation, partnership, association, or other similar form of ownership, the protest must be signed by the person or persons whose signatures would be necessary to transfer an interest in the property.

The ordinance may require that all protest petitions be on a form prescribed by the city, and such form may prescribe any reasonable information deemed necessary to permit the city to determine the sufficiency and accuracy of the petition. A person who has signed a protest petition may withdraw his or her name from the petition at any time prior to the vote on the

proposed zoning amendment. Only those protest petitions that meet the qualifying standards set forth in this section at the time of the vote on the zoning amendment shall trigger the supermajority voting requirement.

**"§ 160D-6-4. Planning board review and comment.**

(a) Initial Zoning. In order to exercise zoning powers conferred by this Chapter for the first time, a local government shall create or designate a planning board under the provisions of this Article or of a special act of the General Assembly. The planning board shall prepare or shall review and comment upon a proposed zoning regulation, including the full text of such regulation and maps showing proposed district boundaries. The planning board may hold public meetings and legislative hearings in the course of preparing the regulation. Upon completion, the planning board shall make a written recommendation regarding adoption of the regulation to the governing board. The governing board shall not hold its required hearing or take action until it has received a recommendation regarding the regulation from the planning board. Following its required hearing, the governing board may refer the regulation back to the planning board for any further recommendations that the board may wish to make prior to final action by the governing board in adopting, modifying and adopting, or rejecting the regulation.

(b) Zoning Amendments. Subsequent to initial adoption of a zoning regulation, all proposed amendments to the zoning regulation or zoning map shall be submitted to the planning board for review and comment. If no written report is received from the planning board within 30 days of referral of the amendment to that board, the governing board may act on the amendment without the planning board report. The governing board is not bound by the recommendations, if any, of the planning board.

(c) Review of Other Ordinances and Actions. Any development regulation other than a zoning regulation that is proposed to be adopted pursuant to this Chapter may be referred to the planning board for review and comment. Any development regulation other than a zoning regulation may provide that future proposed amendments of that ordinance be submitted to the planning board for review and comment. Any other action proposed to be taken pursuant to this Chapter may be referred to the planning board for review and comment.

(d) Plan Consistency. When conducting a review of proposed zoning text or map amendments pursuant to this section, the planning board shall advise and comment on whether the proposed action is consistent with any comprehensive plan that has been adopted and any other officially adopted plan that is applicable. The planning board shall provide a written recommendation to the governing board that addresses plan consistency and other matters as deemed appropriate by the planning board, but a comment by the planning board that a proposed amendment is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan shall not preclude consideration or approval of the proposed amendment by the governing board. If a zoning map amendment qualifies as a "large-scale rezoning" under G.S. 160D-6-2(b), the planning board statement describing plan consistency may address the overall rezoning and describe how the analysis and policies in the relevant adopted plans were considered in the recommendation made.

(e) Separate Board Required. Notwithstanding the authority to assign duties of the planning board to the governing board as provided by this Chapter, the review and comment required by this section shall not be assigned to the governing board and must be performed by a separate board.

**"§ 160D-6-5. Governing board statement.**

(a) Plan Consistency. When adopting or rejecting any zoning text or map amendment, the governing board shall approve a statement describing whether its action is consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan and any other applicable adopted plan, and briefly explain why the board considers the action taken to be in the public interest. That statement is not subject to judicial review. If a zoning map amendment qualifies as a "large-scale rezoning" under G.S. 160D-6-2(b), the governing board statement describing plan consistency may address the

overall rezoning and describe how the analysis and policies in the relevant adopted plans were considered in the action taken.

(b) Reasonableness. When adopting or rejecting any petition for a zoning map amendment, the governing board shall approve a statement analyzing the reasonableness of the proposed amendment. This statement of reasonableness may consider, among other factors, the size, physical conditions, and other attributes of the tract; the benefits and detriment to the landowner, the neighbors, and the surrounding community; and the relationship between the current actual and permissible development on the tract and adjoining areas and the development that would be permissible under the proposed amendment. If a zoning map amendment qualifies as a "large-scale rezoning" under G.S. 160D-6-2(b), the governing board statement on reasonableness may address the overall rezoning.

(c) Single Statement. The statement of reasonableness and plan consistency statement required by this section may be approved as a single statement.

"Article 7.

"Zoning Regulation

"§ 160D-7-1. Purposes.

Zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and shall be designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. To that end, the regulations may address, among other things, the following public purposes: to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic, and dangers; to facilitate the efficient and adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements; and to promote the health, safety, or the general welfare of the community. The regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such city.

"§ 160D-7-2. Grant of power.

A local government may adopt zoning ordinances. A zoning regulation may regulate and restrict the height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures; the percentage of lots that may be occupied; the size of yards, courts, and other open spaces; the density of population; and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land. A local government may regulate development, including floating homes, over estuarine waters and over lands covered by navigable waters owned by the State pursuant to G.S. 146-12. The zoning regulation may provide density credits or severable development rights for dedicated rights-of-way pursuant to G.S. 136-66.10 or G.S. 136-66.11. Where appropriate and consistent with the limitations of G.S. 160D-8-4(c)(1), a zoning regulation may include requirements that street and utility rights-of-way be dedicated to the public, that provision be made of recreational space and facilities, and that performance guarantees be provided.

"§ 160D-7-3. Zoning districts.

(a) Types of Zoning Districts. A local government may divide its territorial jurisdiction into zoning districts of any number, shape, and area deemed best suited to carry out the purposes of this Article. Within those districts it may regulate and restrict the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair or use of buildings, structures, or land. Zoning districts may include, but shall not be limited to:

- (1) Conventional districts, in which a variety of uses are allowed as permitted uses or uses by right and that may also include uses permitted only with a special use permit;
- (2) Conditional districts, in which site plans or individualized development conditions are imposed;
- (3) Districts that address the physical form, mass, and density of structures, public spaces, and streetscapes; and



(4) Overlay districts, in which different requirements are imposed on certain properties within one or more underlying conventional, conditional, or form-based districts.

(b) Conditional Districts. Property may be placed in a conditional district only in response to a petition by all owners of the property to be included. Specific conditions may be proposed by the petitioner or the local government or its agencies, but only those conditions mutually approved by the local government and the petitioner may be incorporated into the zoning regulations. Conditions and site-specific standards imposed in a conditional district shall be limited to those that address the conformance of the development and use of the site to local government ordinances, plans adopted pursuant to G.S. 160D-5-1, or the impacts reasonably expected to be generated by the development or use of the site. The ordinance may provide that defined minor modifications in conditional district standards that do not involve a change in uses permitted or the density of overall development permitted may be reviewed and approved administratively. Any other modification of the conditions and standards in a conditional district shall follow the same process for approval as are applicable to zoning map amendments. If multiple parcels of land are subject to a conditional zoning, the owners of individual parcels may apply for modification of the conditions so long as the modification would not result in other properties failing to meet the terms of the conditions. Any modifications approved shall only be applicable to those properties whose owners petition for the modification.

(c) Uniformity Within Districts. Except as authorized by the foregoing, all regulations shall be uniform for each class or kind of building throughout each district, but the regulations in one district may differ from those in other districts.

(d) Standards Applicable Regardless Of District. A zoning regulation or unified development ordinance may also include development standards that apply uniformly jurisdiction-wide rather than being applicable only in particular zoning districts.

**"§ 160D-7-4. Incentives.**

Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Development. For the purpose of reducing the amount of energy consumption by new development, local governments may adopt ordinances to grant a density bonus, make adjustments to otherwise applicable development requirements, or provide other incentives within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction, if the person agrees to construct new development or reconstruct existing development in a manner that the local government determines, based on generally recognized standards established for such purposes, makes a significant contribution to the reduction of energy consumption and increased use of sustainable design principles.

In order to encourage construction that uses sustainable design principles and to improve energy efficiency in buildings, a local government may charge reduced building permit fees or provide partial rebates of building permit fees for buildings that are constructed or renovated using design principles that conform to or exceed one or more of the following certifications or ratings:

- (1) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification or higher rating under certification standards adopted by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- (2) A One Globe or higher rating under the Green Globes program standards adopted by the Green Building Initiative.
- (3) A certification or rating by another nationally recognized certification or rating system that is equivalent or greater than those listed in subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection.

**"§ 160D-7-5. Quasi-judicial zoning decisions.**

(a) Provisions of Ordinance. – The zoning regulation or unified development ordinance may provide that the board of adjustment, planning board, or governing board hear and decide

quasi-judicial zoning decisions. The board shall follow quasi-judicial procedures as specified in G.S. 160D-4-6 when making any quasi-judicial decision.

(b) Appeals. – Except as otherwise provided by this Chapter, the board of adjustment shall hear and decide appeals from staff decisions regarding administration and enforcement of the zoning or unified development ordinance and may hear appeals arising out of any other ordinance that regulates land use or development. The provisions of G.S. 160D-4-5 and G.S. 105-4-6 are applicable to these appeals.

(c) Special Use Permits. – The ordinance may provide that the board of adjustment, planning board, or governing board hear and decide special use permits in accordance with standards and procedures specified in the ordinance. Reasonable and appropriate conditions may be imposed upon these permits. The ordinance may provide that defined minor modifications to special use permits that do not involve a change in uses permitted or the density of overall development permitted may be reviewed and approved administratively. Any other modification or revocation of a special use permit shall follow the same process for approval as is applicable to the approval of a special use permit. If multiple parcels of land are subject to a special use permit, the owners of individual parcels may apply for permit modification so long as the modification would not result in other properties failing to meet the terms of the special use permit or regulations. Any modifications approved shall only be applicable to those properties whose owners apply for the modification. The ordinance may require that special use permits be recorded with the Register of Deeds.

(d) Variances. – When unnecessary hardships would result from carrying out the strict letter of a zoning regulation, the board of adjustment shall vary any of the provisions of the zoning regulation upon a showing of all of the following:

- (1) Unnecessary hardship would result from the strict application of the regulation. It shall not be necessary to demonstrate that, in the absence of the variance, no reasonable use can be made of the property.
- (2) The hardship results from conditions that are peculiar to the property, such as location, size, or topography. Hardships resulting from personal circumstances, as well as hardships resulting from conditions that are common to the neighborhood or the general public, may not be the basis for granting a variance.
- (3) The hardship did not result from actions taken by the applicant or the property owner. The act of purchasing property with knowledge that circumstances exist that may justify the granting of a variance shall not be regarded as a self-created hardship.
- (4) The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose, and intent of the ordinance, such that public safety is secured, and substantial justice is achieved.

No change in permitted uses may be authorized by variance. Appropriate conditions may be imposed on any variance, provided that the conditions are reasonably related to the variance. Any other ordinance that regulates land use or development may provide for variances consistent with the provisions of this subsection.

**"§ 160D-7-6. Zoning conflicts with other development standards.**

When regulations made under authority of this Article require a greater width or size of yards or courts, or require a lower height of a building or fewer number of stories, or require a greater percentage of a lot to be left unoccupied, or impose other higher standards than are required in any other statute or local ordinance or regulation, the regulations made under authority of this Article shall govern. When the provisions of any other statute or local ordinance or regulation require a greater width or size of yards or courts, or require a lower height of a building or a fewer number of stories, or require a greater percentage of a lot to be left unoccupied, or impose other higher standards than are required by the regulations made

under authority of this Article, the provisions of that statute or local ordinance or regulation shall govern.

**"§ 160D-7-7. Other statutes not repealed.**

This Article shall not repeal any zoning act or city or county planning act, local or general, now in force, except those that are repugnant to or inconsistent herewith. This Article shall be construed to be an enlargement of the duties, powers, and authority contained in other laws authorizing the appointment and proper functioning of planning commissions or zoning commissions by any local government.

**"Article 8.**

**"Subdivision Regulation.**

**"§ 160D-8-1. Authority.**

A local government may by ordinance regulate the subdivision of land within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction. In addition to final plat approval, the ordinance may include provisions for review and approval of sketch plans and preliminary plats. The regulation may provide for different review procedures for different classes of subdivisions. Decisions on approval or denial of preliminary or final plats may be made only on the basis of standards explicitly set forth in the subdivision or unified development ordinance. Whenever the regulation includes criteria for decisions that require application of discretion, those criteria must provide adequate guiding standards, and the quasi-judicial procedures set forth in G.S. 160D-4-6 must be followed.

**"§ 160D-8-2. Applicability.**

(a) For the purpose of this Article, subdivision regulations shall be applicable to all divisions of a tract or parcel of land into two or more lots, building sites, or other divisions when any one or more of those divisions is created for the purpose of sale or building development (whether immediate or future) and shall include all divisions of land involving the dedication of a new street or a change in existing streets; but the following shall not be included within this definition nor be subject to the regulations authorized by this Article:

- (1) The combination or recombination of portions of previously subdivided and recorded lots where the total number of lots is not increased and the resultant lots are equal to or exceed the standards of the local government as shown in its subdivision regulations.
- (2) The division of land into parcels greater than 10 acres where no street right-of-way dedication is involved.
- (3) The public acquisition by purchase of strips of land for the widening or opening of streets or for public transportation system corridors.
- (4) The division of a tract in single ownership whose entire area is no greater than two acres into not more than three lots, where no street right-of-way dedication is involved and where the resultant lots are equal to or exceed the standards of the local government, as shown in its subdivision regulations.

(b) A local government may provide for expedited review of specified classes of subdivisions.

**"§ 160D-8-3. Review process, filing, and recording of subdivision plats.**

(a) Any subdivision regulation adopted pursuant to this Article shall contain provisions setting forth the procedures and standards to be followed in granting or denying approval of a subdivision plat prior to its registration.

(b) A subdivision regulation shall provide that the following agencies be given an opportunity to make recommendations concerning an individual subdivision plat before the plat is approved:

- (1) The district highway engineer as to proposed State streets, State highways, and related drainage systems.

- (2) The county health director or local public utility, as appropriate, as to proposed water or sewerage systems.
- (3) Any other agency or official designated by the governing board.
- (c) The subdivision regulation may provide that final decisions on preliminary plats and final plats are to be made by:
- (1) The governing board.
- (2) The governing board on recommendation of a designated body, or
- (3) A designated planning board, technical review committee of local government staff members, or other designated body or staff person.
- If the final decision on a subdivision plat is administrative, the decision may be assigned to a staff person or committee comprised entirely of staff persons and notice of the decision shall be as provided by G.S. 160D-4-3(b). If the final decision on a subdivision plat is quasi-judicial, the decision shall be assigned to the governing board, the planning board, or other appointed board, and the procedures set forth in G.S. 160D-4-6 shall apply.
- (d) After the effective date that a subdivision regulation is adopted, no subdivision local government's planning and development regulation jurisdiction shall be filed or recorded until it shall have been submitted to and approved by the governing board or appropriate body, as specified in the subdivision ordinance, and until this approval shall have been entered on the face of the plat in writing by an authorized representative of the local government. The Review Officer, pursuant to G.S. 47-30.2, shall not certify a subdivision plat that has not been approved in accordance with these provisions nor shall the clerk of superior court order or direct the recording of a plat if the recording would be in conflict with this section.
- "§ 160D-8-4. Contents and requirements of ordinance.**
- (a) Purposes. A subdivision regulation may provide for the orderly growth and development of the local government; for the coordination of transportation networks and utilities within proposed subdivisions with existing or planned streets and highways and with other public facilities; and for the distribution of population and traffic in a manner that will avoid congestion and overcrowding and will create conditions that substantially promote public health, safety, and the general welfare.
- (b) Plats. The regulation may require a plat be prepared, approved, and recorded pursuant to the provisions of the regulation whenever any subdivision of land takes place. The regulation may include requirements that plats show sufficient data to determine readily and reproduce accurately on the ground the location, bearing, and length of every street and alley line, lot line, easement boundary line, and other property boundaries, including the radius and other data for curved property lines, to an appropriate accuracy and in conformance with good surveying practice.
- (c) Impact Mitigation Measures.
- (1) Scope of impact mitigation. The nature and extent of impact mitigation required by a development regulation shall be rationally related to and no greater than an amount roughly proportional to the impacts reasonably expected to be generated by the proposed development. Only those impact mitigation measures expressly authorized by law may be required.
- (2) Transportation and utilities. The regulation may provide for the dedication of rights-of-way or easements for street and utility purposes, including the dedication of rights-of-way pursuant to G.S. 136-66.10 or G.S. 136-66.11, and the construction of such transportation facilities and utilities.
- The regulation may provide that, in lieu of required street construction, funds provided to the city may be used for the construction of roads to serve the occupants, residents, or invitees of the subdivision or development, and these funds may be used for roads which serve more than one subdivision or development within the area. All funds received by the city pursuant to this

subsection shall be used only for development of roads, including design, land acquisition, and construction. However, a city may undertake these activities in conjunction with the Department of Transportation under an agreement between the city and the Department of Transportation. Any formula adopted to determine the amount of funds required to be paid in lieu of street construction shall be based on the trips generated from the subdivision or development. The regulation may require a combination of partial payment of funds and partial dedication of constructed streets when the governing board of the city determines that a combination is in the best interests of the citizens of the area to be served.

- (3) Recreation areas and open space. The regulation may provide for the dedication or reservation of recreation areas serving residents of the immediate neighborhood within the subdivision or, alternatively, for payment of funds to be used to acquire recreation areas serving residents of the development or subdivision or more than one subdivision or development within the immediate area.

The regulation may require that a developer provide funds to the local government so that the local government may acquire or develop recreational land or areas to serve the development or subdivision, including the purchase of land that may be used to serve more than one subdivision or development within the immediate area. All funds received by the local government pursuant to this paragraph shall be used only for the acquisition or development of recreation, park, or open space sites. Any formula enacted to determine the amount of funds that are to be provided under this paragraph shall be based on the value of the development or subdivision for property tax purposes. The regulation may allow a combination or partial payment of funds and partial dedication of land when the governing board determines that this combination is in the best interests of the citizens of the area to be served.

- (4) Community service facilities. The regulation may provide for the more orderly development of subdivisions by requiring the construction of community service facilities in accordance with local government plans, policies, and standards.

- (5) Fees in lieu. When a dedication of land or construction of facilities is expressly authorized by this section, a regulation may allow for substitution of a payment in lieu of the dedication or construction. If a method of calculating the fee is not provided by this section, the fee required shall be no more than an amount generally equivalent to the cost of the dedication or construction that would otherwise be required.

- (6) School sites. Unless expressly authorized by statute, a local government may not impose a school impact fee as an impact mitigation measure. The regulation may provide for the reservation of school sites in accordance with plans approved by the governing board. In order for this authorization to become effective, before approving such plans the governing board and the board of education with jurisdiction over the area shall jointly determine the location and size of any school sites to be reserved. Whenever a subdivision is submitted for approval which includes part or all of a school site to be reserved under the plan, the governing board shall immediately notify the board of education, and the board of education shall promptly decide whether it still wishes the site to be reserved. If the board of education does not wish to reserve the site, it shall so notify the governing board, and no site



shall be reserved. If the board of education does wish to reserve the site, the subdivision or site plan shall not be approved without such reservation. The board of education shall then have 18 months beginning on the date of final approval of the subdivision or site plan within which to acquire the site by purchase or by initiating condemnation proceedings. If the board of education has not purchased or begun proceedings to condemn the site within 18 months, the landowner may treat the land as freed of the reservation.

(d) Performance Guarantees. To assure compliance with these and other development regulation requirements, the regulation may provide for performance guarantees to assure successful completion of required improvements. If a performance guarantee is required, the local government shall provide a range of options of types of performance guarantees, including, but not limited to, surety bonds or letters of credit, from which the person required to give the performance guarantee may choose. For any specific development, the type of performance guarantee from the range specified by the local government shall be at the election of the person required to give the performance guarantee.

**"§ 160D-8-5. Notice of new subdivision fees and fee increases; public comment period.**

(a) A local government shall provide notice to interested parties of the imposition of or increase in fees or charges applicable solely to the construction of development subject to this Article at least seven days prior to the first meeting where the imposition of or increase in the fees or charges is on the agenda for consideration. The local government shall employ at least two of the following means of communication in order to provide the notice required by this section:

- (1) Notice of the meeting in a prominent location on a Web site managed or maintained by the local government.
- (2) Notice of the meeting in a prominent physical location, including, but not limited to, any government building, library, or courthouse within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of the local government.
- (3) Notice of the meeting by electronic mail or other reasonable means to a list of interested parties that is created by the local government for the purpose of notification as required by this section.

If a city does not maintain its own Web site, it may employ the notice option provided by subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section by submitting a request to a county or counties in which the city is located to post such notice in a prominent location on a Web site that is maintained by the county or counties. Any city that elects to provide such notice shall make its request to the county or counties at least 15 days prior to the date of the first meeting where the imposition of or increase in the fees or charges is on the agenda for consideration.

(b) During the consideration of the imposition of or increase in fees or charges as provided in subsection (a) of this section, the governing board of the local government shall permit a period of public comment.

(c) This section shall not apply if the imposition of or increase in fees or charges is contained in a budget filed in accordance with the requirements of G.S. 159-12.

**"§ 160D-8-6. Effect of plat approval on dedications.**

The approval of a plat shall not be deemed to constitute or affect the acceptance by the local government or public of the dedication of any street or other ground, public utility line, or other public facility shown on the plat. However, any governing board may by resolution accept any dedication made to the public of lands or facilities for streets, parks, public utility lines, or other public purposes, when the lands or facilities are located within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction. Acceptance of dedication of lands or facilities located within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction but outside the corporate limits of a city shall not place on the city any duty to open, operate, repair, or maintain any street, utility line, or

other land or facility, and a city shall in no event be held to answer in any civil action or proceeding for failure to open, repair, or maintain any street located outside its corporate limits. Unless a city, county, or other public entity operating a water system shall have agreed to begin operation and maintenance of the water system or water system facilities within one year of the time of issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the first unit of housing in the subdivision, a city or county shall not, as part of its subdivision regulation applied to facilities or land outside the corporate limits of a city, require dedication of water systems or facilities as a condition for subdivision approval.

**"§ 160D-8-7. Penalties for transferring lots in unapproved subdivisions.**

(a) If a local government adopts a subdivision regulation, any person who, being the owner or agent of the owner of any land located within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of that local government, thereafter subdivides his land in violation of the ordinance or transfers or sells land by reference to, exhibition of, or any other use of a plat showing a subdivision of the land before the plat has been properly approved under such ordinance and recorded in the office of the appropriate Register of Deeds, shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The description by metes and bounds in the instrument of transfer or other document used in the process of selling or transferring land shall not exempt the transaction from this penalty. The local government may bring an action for injunction of any illegal subdivision, transfer, conveyance, or sale of land, and the court shall, upon appropriate findings, issue an injunction and order requiring the offending party to comply with the subdivision ordinance. Building permits required pursuant to G.S. 160D-11-8 may be denied for lots that have been illegally subdivided. In addition to other remedies, a local government may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent the unlawful subdivision of land, to restrain, correct, or abate the violation, or to prevent any illegal act or conduct.

(b) The provisions of this section shall not prohibit any owner or its agent from entering into contracts to sell or lease by reference to an approved preliminary plat for which a final plat has not yet been properly approved under the subdivision ordinance or recorded with the Register of Deeds, provided the contract does all of the following:

- (1) Incorporates as an attachment a copy of the preliminary plat referenced in the contract and obligates the owner to deliver to the buyer a copy of the recorded plat prior to closing and conveyance.
- (2) Plainly and conspicuously notifies the prospective buyer or lessee that a final subdivision plat has not been approved or recorded at the time of the contract, that no governmental body will incur any obligation to the prospective buyer or lessee with respect to the approval of the final subdivision plat, that changes between the preliminary and final plats are possible, and that the contract or lease may be terminated without breach by the buyer or lessee if the final recorded plat differs in any material respect from the preliminary plat.
- (3) Provides that if the approved and recorded final plat does not differ in any material respect from the plat referred to in the contract, the buyer or lessee may not be required by the seller or lessor to close any earlier than five days after the delivery of a copy of the final recorded plat.
- (4) Provides that if the approved and recorded final plat differs in any material respect from the preliminary plat referred to in the contract, the buyer or lessee may not be required by the seller or lessor to close any earlier than 15 days after the delivery of the final recorded plat, during which 15-day period the buyer or lessee may terminate the contract without breach or any further obligation and may receive a refund of all earnest money or prepaid purchase price.

(c) The provisions of this section shall not prohibit any owner or its agent from entering into contracts to sell or lease land by reference to an approved preliminary plat for which a final plat has not been properly approved under the subdivision ordinance or recorded with the Register of Deeds where the buyer or lessee is any person who has contracted to acquire or lease the land for the purpose of engaging in the business of construction of residential, commercial, or industrial buildings on the land, or for the purpose of resale or lease of the land to persons engaged in that kind of business, provided that no conveyance of that land may occur and no contract to lease it may become effective until after the final plat has been properly approved under the subdivision ordinance and recorded with the Register of Deeds.

**"§ 160D-8.8. Appeals of decisions on subdivision plats.**

Appeals of subdivision decisions may be made pursuant to G.S. 160D-14-3.

"Article 9.

"Regulation of Particular Uses and Areas.

"Part 1. Particular Land Uses and Areas.

**"§ 160D-9-1. Regulation of particular uses and areas.**

A local government may regulate the uses and areas set forth in this Article in zoning regulations pursuant to Article 7, in development regulations adopted under this Article or in regulations adopted under Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes or Article 6 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes. This shall not be deemed to expand, diminish, or alter the scope of authority granted pursuant to those Articles. In all instances, the substance of the local government regulation shall be consistent with the provisions in this Article. The provisions of this Chapter apply to any regulation adopted pursuant to this Article that substantially affects land use and development.

**"§ 160D-9-2. Adult businesses.**

(a) The General Assembly finds and determines that sexually oriented businesses can and do cause adverse secondary impacts on neighboring properties. Numerous studies relevant to North Carolina have found increases in crime rates and decreases in neighboring property values as a result of the location of sexually oriented businesses in inappropriate locations or from the operation of such businesses in an inappropriate manner. Reasonable local government regulation of sexually oriented businesses in order to prevent or ameliorate adverse secondary impacts is consistent with the federal constitutional protection afforded to nonobscene but sexually explicit speech.

(b) In addition to State laws on obscenity, indecent exposure, and adult establishments, local government regulation of the location and operation of sexually oriented businesses is necessary to prevent undue adverse secondary impacts that would otherwise result from these businesses.

(c) A local government may regulate sexually oriented businesses through zoning regulations, licensing requirements, or other appropriate local ordinances. The local government may require a fee for the initial license and any annual renewal. Such local regulations may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Restrictions on location of sexually oriented businesses, such as limitation to specified zoning districts and minimum separation from sensitive land uses and other sexually oriented businesses;
- (2) Regulations on operation of sexually oriented businesses, such as limits on hours of operation, open booth requirements, limitations on exterior advertising and noise, age of patrons and employees, required separation of patrons and performers, clothing restrictions for masseuses, and clothing restrictions for servers of alcoholic beverages;
- (3) Clothing restrictions for entertainers; and
- (4) Registration and disclosure requirements for owners and employees with a criminal record other than minor traffic offenses, and restrictions on

ownership by or employment of a person with a criminal record that includes offenses reasonably related to the legal operation of sexually oriented businesses.

(d) In order to preserve the status quo while appropriate studies are conducted and the scope of potential regulations is deliberated, local government may enact moratoria of reasonable duration on either the opening of any new businesses authorized to be regulated under this section or the expansion of any such existing business. Businesses existing at the time of the effective date of regulations adopted under this section may be required to come into compliance with newly adopted regulations within an appropriate and reasonable period of time.

(e) Local governments may enter into cooperative agreements regarding coordinated regulation of sexually oriented businesses, including provision of adequate alternative sites for the location of constitutionally protected speech within an interrelated geographic area.

(f) For the purpose of this section, "sexually oriented business" means any business or enterprise that has as one of its principal business purposes or as a significant portion of its business an emphasis on matter and conduct depicting, describing, or related to anatomical areas and sexual activities specified in G.S. 14-202.10. Local governments may adopt detailed definitions of these and similar businesses in order to precisely define the scope of any local regulations.

#### **"§ 160D-9-3. Agricultural uses.**

(a) Bona Fide Farming Exempt from County Zoning. County zoning regulations may affect property used for bona fide farm purposes only as provided in this section. This section does not limit zoning regulation with respect to the use of farm property for nonfarm purposes.

Except as provided in G.S. 106-743.4 for farms that are subject to a conservation agreement under G.S. 106-743.2, bona fide farm purposes include the production and activities relating or incidental to the production of crops, grains, fruits, vegetables, ornamental and flowering plants, dairy, livestock, poultry, and all other forms of agriculture, as defined in G.S. 106-581.1. For purposes of this section, "when performed on the farm" in G.S. 106-581.1(6) shall include the farm within the jurisdiction of the county and any other farm owned or leased to or from others by the bona fide farm operator, no matter where located. For purposes of this section, the production of a nonfarm product that the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services recognizes as a "Goodness Grows in North Carolina" product that is produced on a farm subject to a conservation agreement under G.S. 106-743.2 is a bona fide farm purpose. For purposes of determining whether a property is being used for bona fide farm purposes, any of the following shall constitute sufficient evidence that the property is being used for bona fide farm purposes:

- (1) A farm sales tax exemption certificate issued by the Department of Revenue.
- (2) A copy of the property tax listing showing that the property is eligible for participation in the present use value program pursuant to G.S. 105-277.3.
- (3) A copy of the farm owner's or operator's Schedule F from the owner's or operator's most recent federal income tax return.
- (4) A forest management plan.
- (5) A Farm Identification Number issued by the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency.

The definitions set out in G.S. 106-802 apply to this section. A county may adopt zoning regulations governing swine farms served by animal waste management systems having a design capacity of 600,000 pounds steady state live weight (SSLW) or greater provided that the zoning regulations may not have the effect of excluding swine farms served by an animal waste management system having a design capacity of 600,000 pounds SSLW or greater from the entire zoning jurisdiction.

(b) County Zoning of Residential Uses on Large Lots in Agricultural Districts. A county zoning regulation shall not prohibit single-family detached residential uses constructed in accordance with the North Carolina State Building Code on lots greater than 10 acres in size in zoning districts where more than fifty percent (50%) of the land is in use for agricultural or silvicultural purposes, except that this restriction shall not apply to commercial or industrial districts where a broad variety of commercial or industrial uses are permissible. An ordinance adopted pursuant to this section shall not require that a lot greater than 10 acres in size have frontage on a public road or county-approved private road, or be served by public water or sewer lines, in order to be developed for single-family residential purposes.

(c) Agricultural Areas in Municipal Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. Property that is located in the geographic area of a municipality's extraterritorial planning and development regulation jurisdiction and that is used for bona fide farm purposes is exempt from the municipality's zoning regulation to the same extent bona fide farming activities are exempt from county zoning pursuant to this section. As used in this subsection, "property" means a single tract of property or an identifiable portion of a single tract. Property that ceases to be used for bona fide farm purposes shall become subject to exercise of the municipality's planning and development regulation jurisdiction under this Chapter. For purposes of complying with 44 C.F.R. Part 60, Subpart A, property that is exempt from the exercise of municipal extraterritorial planning and development regulation jurisdiction pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to the county's floodplain ordinance or all floodplain regulation provisions of the county's unified development ordinance.

(d) Accessory Farm Buildings. A municipality may provide in its zoning regulation that an accessory building of a "bona fide farm" has the same exemption from the building code as it would have under county zoning.

(e) City Regulations in Voluntary Agricultural Districts. A city may amend the ordinances applicable within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction to provide flexibility to farming operations that are located within a city or county voluntary agricultural district or enhanced voluntary agricultural district adopted under Article 61 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes. Amendments to applicable ordinances may include provisions regarding on-farm sales, pick-your-own operations, road signs, agritourism, and other activities incident to farming.

**"§ 160D-9-4. Airport zoning.**

Any local government may enact and enforce airport zoning regulations pursuant to this Chapter or as authorized by Article 4 of Chapter 63 of the General Statutes. Airport zoning regulations for real property within six miles of any cargo airport complex site subject to regulation by the North Carolina Global TransPark Authority are governed by G.S. 63A-18.

**"§ 160D-9-5. Amateur radio antennas.**

A local government ordinance based on health, safety, or aesthetic considerations that regulates the placement, screening, or height of the antennas or support structures of amateur radio operators must reasonably accommodate amateur radio communications and must represent the minimum practicable regulation necessary to accomplish the purpose of the local government. A local government may not restrict antennas or antenna support structures of amateur radio operators to heights of 90 feet or lower unless the restriction is necessary to achieve a clearly defined health, safety, or aesthetic objective of the local government.

**"§ 160D-9-6. Family care homes.**

(a) The General Assembly finds it is the public policy of this State to provide persons with disabilities with the opportunity to live in a normal residential environment.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Family care home" means a home with support and supervisory personnel that provides room and board, personal care, and habilitation services in a family environment for not more than six resident persons with disabilities.



(2) "Person with disabilities" means a person with a temporary or permanent physical, emotional, or mental disability, including, but not limited to, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, hearing and sight impairments, emotional disturbances, and orthopedic impairments, but not including mentally ill persons who are dangerous to others as defined in G.S. 122C-3(11)b.

(c) A family care home shall be deemed a residential use of property for zoning purposes and shall be a permissible use in all residential districts. No local government may require that a family care home, its owner, or operator obtain, because of the use, a special use permit or variance from any such zoning regulation; provided, however, that a local government may prohibit a family care home from being located within a one-half mile radius of an existing family care home.

(d) A family care home shall be deemed a residential use of property for the purposes of determining charges or assessments imposed by local governments or businesses for water, sewer, power, telephone service, cable television, garbage and trash collection, repairs or improvements to roads, streets, and sidewalks, and other services, utilities, and improvements.

**"§ 160D-9-7. Fraternities and sororities.**

A zoning or unified development ordinance may not differentiate in terms of the regulations applicable to fraternities or sororities between those fraternities or sororities that are approved or recognized by a college or university and those that are not.

**"§ 160D-9-8. Manufactured homes.**

(a) The General Assembly finds that manufactured housing offers affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents of this State who could not otherwise afford to own their own home. The General Assembly further finds that some local governments have adopted zoning regulations which severely restrict the placement of manufactured homes. It is the intent of the General Assembly in enacting this section that local governments reexamine their land use practices to assure compliance with applicable statutes and case law, and consider allocating more residential land area for manufactured homes based upon local housing needs.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term "manufactured home" is defined as provided in G.S. 143-145(7).

(c) A local government may not adopt or enforce zoning regulations or other provisions which have the effect of excluding manufactured homes from the entire zoning jurisdiction.

(d) A local government may adopt and enforce appearance and dimensional criteria for manufactured homes. Such criteria shall be designed to protect property values, to preserve the character and integrity of the community or individual neighborhoods within the community, and to promote the health, safety, and welfare of area residents. The criteria shall be adopted by ordinance.

(e) In accordance with the local government's comprehensive plan and based on local housing needs, a local government may designate a manufactured home overlay district within a residential district. Such overlay district may not consist of an individual lot or scattered lots but shall consist of a defined area within which additional requirements or standards are placed upon manufactured homes.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt or supersede valid restrictive covenants running with the land. The terms "mobile home" and "trailer" in any valid restrictive covenants running with the land shall include the term "manufactured home" as defined in this section.

**"§ 160D-9-9. Modular homes.**

Modular homes shall comply with the design and construction standards set forth in G.S. 143-139.1.

**"§ 160D-9-10. Outdoor advertising.**

1       (a) As used in this section, the term "off-premises outdoor advertising" includes  
2 off-premises outdoor advertising visible from the main-traveled way of any road.

3       (b) A local government may require the removal of an off-premises outdoor advertising  
4 sign that is nonconforming under a local ordinance and may regulate the use of off-premises  
5 outdoor advertising within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction in accordance  
6 with the applicable provisions of this Chapter.

7       (c) A local government shall give written notice of its intent to require removal of  
8 off-premises outdoor advertising by sending a letter by certified mail to the last known address  
9 of the owner of the outdoor advertising and the owner of the property on which the outdoor  
10 advertising is located.

11       (d) No local government may enact or amend an ordinance of general applicability to  
12 require the removal of any nonconforming, lawfully erected off-premises outdoor advertising  
13 sign without the payment of monetary compensation to the owners of the off-premises outdoor  
14 advertising, except as provided below. The payment of monetary compensation is not required  
15 if:

16           (1) The local government and the owner of the nonconforming off-premises  
17 outdoor advertising enter into a relocation agreement pursuant to subsection  
18 (g) of this section.

19           (2) The local government and the owner of the nonconforming off-premises  
20 outdoor advertising enter into an agreement pursuant to subsection (k) of this  
21 section.

22           (3) The off-premises outdoor advertising is determined to be a public nuisance  
23 or detrimental to the health or safety of the populace.

24           (4) The removal is required for opening, widening, extending, or improving  
25 streets or sidewalks, or for establishing, extending, enlarging, or improving  
26 any of the public enterprises listed in G.S. 160A-311, and the local  
27 government allows the off-premises outdoor advertising to be relocated to a  
28 comparable location.

29           (5) The off-premises outdoor advertising is subject to removal pursuant to  
30 statutes, ordinances, or regulations generally applicable to the demolition or  
31 removal of damaged structures.

32       (e) Monetary compensation is the fair market value of the off-premises outdoor  
33 advertising in place immediately prior to its removal and without consideration of the effect of  
34 the ordinance or any diminution in value caused by the ordinance requiring its removal.  
35 Monetary compensation shall be determined based on:

36           (1) The factors listed in G.S. 105-317.1(a); and

37           (2) The listed property tax value of the property and any documents regarding  
38 value submitted to the taxing authority.

39       (f) If the parties are unable to reach an agreement under subsection (e) of this section  
40 on monetary compensation to be paid by the local government to the owner of the  
41 nonconforming off-premises outdoor advertising sign for its removal, and the local government  
42 elects to proceed with the removal of the sign, the local government may bring an action in  
43 superior court for a determination of the monetary compensation to be paid. In determining  
44 monetary compensation, the court shall consider the factors set forth in subsection (e) of this  
45 section. Upon payment of monetary compensation for the sign, the local government shall own  
46 the sign.

47       (g) In lieu of paying monetary compensation, a local government may enter into an  
48 agreement with the owner of a nonconforming off-premises outdoor advertising sign to relocate  
49 and reconstruct the sign. The agreement shall include the following:

(1) Provision for relocation of the sign to a site reasonably comparable to or better than the existing location. In determining whether a location is comparable or better, the following factors shall be taken into consideration:

- a. The size and format of the sign.
- b. The characteristics of the proposed relocation site, including visibility, traffic count, area demographics, zoning, and any uncompensated differential in the sign owner's cost to lease the replacement site.
- c. The timing of the relocation.

(2) Provision for payment by the local government of the reasonable costs of relocating and reconstructing the sign, including:

- a. The actual cost of removing the sign.
- b. The actual cost of any necessary repairs to the real property for damages caused in the removal of the sign.
- c. The actual cost of installing the sign at the new location.
- d. An amount of money equivalent to the income received from the lease of the sign for a period of up to 30 days if income is lost during the relocation of the sign.

(h) For the purposes of relocating and reconstructing a nonconforming off-premises outdoor advertising sign pursuant to subsection (g) of this section, a local government, consistent with the welfare and safety of the community as a whole, may adopt a resolution or adopt or modify its ordinances to provide for the issuance of a permit or other approval, including conditions as appropriate, or to provide for dimensional, spacing, setback, or use variances as it deems appropriate.

(i) If a local government has offered to enter into an agreement to relocate a nonconforming off-premises outdoor advertising sign pursuant to subsection (g) of this section, and within 120 days after the initial notice by the local government the parties have not been able to agree that the site or sites offered by the local government for relocation of the sign are reasonably comparable to or better than the existing site, the parties shall enter into binding arbitration to resolve their disagreements. Unless a different method of arbitration is agreed upon by the parties, the arbitration shall be conducted by a panel of three arbitrators. Each party shall select one arbitrator, and the two arbitrators chosen by the parties shall select the third member of the panel. The American Arbitration Association rules shall apply to the arbitration unless the parties agree otherwise.

(j) If the arbitration results in a determination that the site or sites offered by the local government for relocation of the nonconforming sign are not comparable to or better than the existing site, and the local government elects to proceed with the removal of the sign, the parties shall determine the monetary compensation under subsection (e) of this section to be paid to the owner of the sign. If the parties are unable to reach an agreement regarding monetary compensation within 30 days of the receipt of the arbitrators' determination, and the local government elects to proceed with the removal of the sign, then the local government may bring an action in superior court for a determination of the monetary compensation to be paid by the local government to the owner for the removal of the sign. In determining monetary compensation, the court shall consider the factors set forth in subsection (e) of this section. Upon payment of monetary compensation for the sign, the local government shall own the sign.

(k) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a local government and an off-premises outdoor advertising sign owner may enter into a voluntary agreement allowing for the removal of the sign after a set period of time in lieu of monetary compensation. A local government may adopt an ordinance or resolution providing for a relocation, reconstruction, or removal agreement.

(l) A local government has up to three years from the effective date of an ordinance enacted under this section to pay monetary compensation to the owner of the off-premises outdoor advertising provided the affected property remains in place until the compensation is paid.

(m) This section does not apply to any ordinance in effect on the effective date of this section. A local government may amend an ordinance in effect on the effective date of this section to extend application of the ordinance to off-premises outdoor advertising located in territory acquired by annexation or located in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the city. A local government may repeal or amend an ordinance in effect on the effective date of this section so long as the amendment to the existing ordinance does not reduce the period of amortization in effect on the effective date of this section.

(n) The provisions of this section shall not be used to interpret, construe, alter, or otherwise modify the exercise of the power of eminent domain by an entity pursuant to Chapter 40A of the General Statutes or Chapter 136 of the General Statutes.

(o) Nothing in this section shall limit a local government's authority to use amortization as a means of phasing out nonconforming uses other than off-premises outdoor advertising.

**"§ 160D-9-11. Public buildings.**

All of the provisions of local government zoning regulations are applicable to the erection, construction, and use of buildings by the State of North Carolina and its political subdivisions.

Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or local law or ordinance, except as provided in Part 4 of Article 9 of this Chapter, no land owned by the State of North Carolina may be included within an overlay district or a conditional zoning district without approval of the Council of State or its delegee.

**"§ 160D-9-12. Solar collectors.**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, no local government ordinance shall prohibit, or have the effect of prohibiting, the installation of a solar collector that gathers solar radiation as a substitute for traditional energy for water heating, active space heating and cooling, passive heating, or generating electricity for a residential property, and no person shall be denied permission by a local government to install a solar collector that gathers solar radiation as a substitute for traditional energy for water heating, active space heating and cooling, passive heating, or generating electricity for a residential property. As used in this section, the term "residential property" means property where the predominant use is for residential purposes.

(b) This section does not prohibit an ordinance regulating the location or screening of solar collectors as described in subsection (a) of this section, provided the ordinance does not have the effect of preventing the reasonable use of a solar collector for a residential property.

(c) This section does not prohibit an ordinance that would prohibit the location of solar collectors as described in subsection (a) of this section that are visible by a person on the ground:

(1) On the facade of a structure that faces areas open to common or public access;

(2) On a roof surface that slopes downward toward the same areas open to common or public access that the facade of the structure faces; or

(3) Within the area set off by a line running across the facade of the structure extending to the property boundaries on either side of the facade, and those areas of common or public access faced by the structure.

(d) In any civil action arising under this section, the court may award costs and reasonable attorneys' fees to the prevailing party.

**"§ 160D-9-13. Temporary health care structures.**

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Activities of daily living. – Bathing, dressing, personal hygiene, ambulation or locomotion, transferring, toileting, and eating.
- (2) Caregiver. – An individual 18 years of age or older who (i) provides care for a mentally or physically impaired person and (ii) is a first or second degree relative of the mentally or physically impaired person for whom the individual is caring.
- (3) First or second degree relative. – A spouse, lineal ascendant, lineal descendant, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece and includes half, step, and in-law relationships.
- (4) Mentally or physically impaired person. – A person who is a resident of this State and who requires assistance with two or more activities of daily living as certified in writing by a physician licensed to practice in this State.
- (5) Temporary family health care structure. – A transportable residential structure, providing an environment facilitating a caregiver's provision of care for a mentally or physically impaired person, that (i) is primarily assembled at a location other than its site of installation, (ii) is limited to one occupant who shall be the mentally or physically impaired person, (iii) has no more than 300 gross square feet, and (iv) complies with applicable provisions of the State Building Code and G.S. 143-139.1(b). Placing the temporary family health care structure on a permanent foundation shall not be required or permitted.

(b) A local government shall consider a temporary family health care structure used by a caregiver in providing care for a mentally or physically impaired person on property owned or occupied by the caregiver as the caregiver's residence as a permitted accessory use in any single-family residential zoning district on lots zoned for single-family detached dwellings.

(c) A local government shall consider a temporary family health care structure used by an individual who is the named legal guardian of the mentally or physically impaired person a permitted accessory use in any single-family residential zoning district on lots zoned for single-family detached dwellings in accordance with this section if the temporary family health care structure is placed on the property of the residence of the individual and is used to provide care for the mentally or physically impaired person.

(d) Only one temporary family health care structure shall be allowed on a lot or parcel of land. The temporary family health care structures under subsections (b) and (c) of this section shall not require a special use permit or be subjected to any other local zoning requirements beyond those imposed upon other authorized accessory use structures, except otherwise provided in this section. Such temporary family health care structures shall comply with all setback requirements that apply to the primary structure and with any maximum floor area ratio limitations that may apply to the primary structure.

(e) Any person proposing to install a temporary family health care structure shall first obtain a permit from the local government. The local government may charge a fee of up to one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for the initial permit and an annual renewal fee of up to fifty dollars (\$50.00). The local government may not withhold a permit if the applicant provides sufficient proof of compliance with this section. The local government may require that the applicant provide evidence of compliance with this section on an annual basis as long as the temporary family health care structure remains on the property. The evidence may involve the inspection by the local government of the temporary family health care structure at reasonable times convenient to the caregiver, not limited to any annual compliance confirmation, and annual renewal of the doctor's certification.

(f) Notwithstanding subsection (i) of this section, any temporary family health care structure installed under this section may be required to connect to any water, sewer, and electric utilities serving the property and shall comply with all applicable State law, local



ordinances, and other requirements, including Article 11 of this Chapter, as if the temporary family health care structure were permanent real property.

(g) No signage advertising or otherwise promoting the existence of the temporary health care structure shall be permitted either on the exterior of the temporary family health care structure or elsewhere on the property.

(h) Any temporary family health care structure installed pursuant to this section shall be removed within 60 days in which the mentally or physically impaired person is no longer receiving or is no longer in need of the assistance provided for in this section. If the temporary family health care structure is needed for another mentally or physically impaired person, the temporary family health care structure may continue to be used, or may be reinstated on the property within 60 days of its removal, as applicable.

(i) The local government may revoke the permit granted pursuant to subsection (e) of this section if the permit holder violates any provision of this section or G.S. 160A-202. The local government may seek injunctive relief or other appropriate actions or proceedings to ensure compliance with this section or G.S. 160A-202.

(j) Temporary family health care structures shall be treated as tangible personal property for purposes of taxation.

#### **"§ 160D-9-14. Streets and transportation.**

(a) Street Setbacks and Driveway Connection Regulations. Local governments may establish street setback and driveway connection regulations as a part of ordinances adopted pursuant to this Chapter or may do so pursuant to G.S. 160A-306 and G.S. 160A-307.

(b) Transportation Corridor Official Maps. Any local government may establish official transportation corridor maps and may enact and enforce ordinances pursuant to Article 2E of Chapter 136 of the General Statutes.

#### **"Part 2. Environmental Regulations.**

#### **"§ 160D-9-20. Local environmental regulations.**

(a) Local governments are authorized to exercise the powers conferred by Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes and Article 6 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes to adopt and enforce local ordinances pursuant to this Part to the extent necessary to comply with State and federal law, rules and regulations, or permits consistent with the interpretations and directions of the State or federal agency issuing the permit.

(b) Local environmental regulations adopted pursuant to this Part are not subject to the variance provisions of G.S. 160D-7-5 unless that is specifically authorized by the local ordinance.

#### **"§ 160D-9-21. Forestry activities.**

(a) The following definitions apply to this section:

(1) Development. – Any activity, including timber harvesting, that is associated with the conversion of forestland to nonforest use.

(2) Forest management plan. – A document that defines a landowner's forest management objectives and describes specific measures to be taken to achieve those objectives. A forest management plan shall include silvicultural practices that both ensure optimal forest productivity and environmental protection of land by either commercially growing timber through the establishment of forest stands or by ensuring the proper regeneration of forest stands to commercial levels of production after the harvest of timber.

(3) Forestland. – Land that is devoted to growing trees for the production of timber, wood, and other forest products.

(4) Forestry. – The professional practice embracing the science, business, and art of creating, conserving, and managing forests and forestland for the

- 1 sustained use and enjoyment of their resources, materials, or other forest  
2 products.
- 3 (5) Forestry activity. – Any activity associated with the growing, managing,  
4 harvesting, and related transportation, reforestation, or protection of trees  
5 and timber, provided that such activities comply with existing State rules and  
6 regulations pertaining to forestry.
- 7 (b) A local government shall not adopt or enforce any ordinance, rule, regulation, or  
8 resolution that regulates either:
- 9 (1) Forestry activity on forestland that is taxed on the basis of its present-use  
10 value as forestland under Article 12 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes.
- 11 (2) Forestry activity that is conducted in accordance with a forest management  
12 plan that is prepared or approved by a forester registered in accordance with  
13 Chapter 89B of the General Statutes.
- 14 (c) This section shall not be construed to limit, expand, or otherwise alter the authority  
15 of a local government to:
- 16 (1) Regulate activity associated with development. A local government may  
17 deny a building permit or refuse to approve a site or subdivision plan for  
18 either a period of up to:
- 19 a. Three years after the completion of a timber harvest if the harvest  
20 results in the removal of all or substantially all of the trees that were  
21 protected under local government regulations governing development  
22 from the tract of land for which the permit or approval is sought.
- 23 b. Five years after the completion of a timber harvest if the harvest  
24 results in the removal of all or substantially all of the trees that were  
25 protected under local government regulations governing development  
26 from the tract of land for which the permit or approval is sought and  
27 the harvest was a willful violation of the local government  
28 regulations.
- 29 (2) Regulate trees pursuant to any local act of the General Assembly.
- 30 (3) Adopt ordinances that are necessary to comply with any federal or State law,  
31 regulation, or rule.
- 32 (4) Exercise its planning or zoning authority under this Chapter.
- 33 (5) Regulate and protect streets.
- 34 **"§ 160D-9-21. Erosion and sedimentation control.**
- 35 Any local government may enact and enforce erosion and sedimentation control ordinances  
36 as authorized by Article 4 of Chapter 113A of the General Statutes and shall comply with all  
37 applicable provisions of that Article and, to the extent not inconsistent with that Article, with  
38 this Chapter.
- 39 **"§ 160D-9-22. Floodplain regulations.**
- 40 Any local government may enact and enforce floodplain regulation or flood damage  
41 prevention regulation ordinances as authorized by Part 6 of Article 21 of Chapter 143 of the  
42 General Statutes and shall comply with all applicable provisions of that Part and, to the extent  
43 not inconsistent with that Article, with this Chapter.
- 44 **"§ 160D-9-23. Mountain ridge protection.**
- 45 Any local government may enact and enforce mountain ridge protection ordinances  
46 pursuant to Article 14 of Chapter 113A of the General Statutes and shall comply with all  
47 applicable provisions of that Article and, to the extent not inconsistent with that Article, with  
48 this Chapter unless the local government has removed itself from the coverage of Article 14 of  
49 Chapter 113A of the General Statutes through the procedure provided by law.
- 50 **"§ 160D-9-24. Stormwater control.**

(a) A local government may adopt and enforce a stormwater control ordinance to protect water quality and control water quantity. A local government may adopt a stormwater management ordinance pursuant to this Chapter, its charter, other applicable laws, or any combination of these powers.

(b) A federal, State, or local government project shall comply with the requirements of a local government stormwater control ordinance unless the federal, State, or local government agency has a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit that applies to the project. A local government may take enforcement action to compel a State or local government agency to comply with a stormwater control ordinance that implements the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit issued to the local government. To the extent permitted by federal law, including Chapter 26 of Title 33 of the United States Code, a local government may take enforcement action to compel a federal government agency to comply with a stormwater control ordinance.

(c) A local government may implement illicit discharge detection and elimination controls, construction site stormwater runoff controls, and post-construction runoff controls through an ordinance or other regulatory mechanism to the extent allowable under State law.

(d) A local government that holds a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued pursuant to G.S. 143-214.7 may adopt an ordinance, applicable within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction, to establish the stormwater control program necessary for the local government to comply with the permit. A local government may adopt an ordinance that bans illicit discharges within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction. A local government may adopt an ordinance, applicable within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction, that requires (i) deed restrictions and protective covenants to ensure that each project, including the stormwater management system, will be maintained so as to protect water quality and control water quantity and (ii) financial arrangements to ensure that adequate funds are available for the maintenance and replacement costs of the project.

(e) Unless the local government requests the permit condition in its permit application, the Environmental Management Commission may not require as a condition of a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit issued pursuant to G.S. 143-214.7 that a city implement the measure required by 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 122.34(b)(3)(1 July 2003 Edition) in its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

"Part 3. Wireless Telecommunication Facilities.

**"§ 160D-9-30. Purpose and compliance with federal law.**

(a) The purpose of this section is to ensure the safe and efficient integration of facilities necessary for the provision of advanced mobile broadband and wireless telecommunications services throughout the community and to ensure the ready availability of reliable wireless service to the public, government agencies, and first responders, with the intention of furthering the public safety and general welfare.

(b) The deployment of wireless infrastructure is critical to ensuring first responders can provide for the health and safety of all residents of North Carolina and that, consistent with section 6409 of the federal Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, 47 U.S.C. § 1455(a), which creates a national wireless emergency communications network for use by first responders that in large measure will be dependent on facilities placed on existing wireless communications support structures, it is the policy of this State to facilitate the placement of wireless communications support structures in all areas of North Carolina. The following standards shall apply to a local government's actions, as a regulatory body, in the regulation of the placement, construction, or modification of a wireless communications facility.

(c) The placement, construction, or modification of wireless communications facilities shall be in conformity with the Federal Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 332 as amended, section 6409 of the federal Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, 47 U.S.C. §

1455(a), and in accordance with the rules promulgated by the Federal Communications Commission.

**"§ 160D-9-31. Definitions.**

The following definitions apply in this Part.

- (1) Antenna. – Communications equipment that transmits, receives, or transmits and receives electromagnetic radio signals used in the provision of all types of wireless communications services.
- (2) Application. – A formal request submitted to the local government to construct or modify a wireless support structure or a wireless facility.
- (3) Base station. – A station at a specific site authorized to communicate with mobile stations, generally consisting of radio receivers, antennas, coaxial cables, power supplies, and other associated electronics.
- (4) Building permit. – An official administrative authorization issued by the local government prior to beginning construction consistent with the provisions of G.S. 160D-11-8.
- (5) Collocation. – The placement or installation of wireless facilities on existing structures, including electrical transmission towers, water towers, buildings, and other structures capable of structurally supporting the attachment of wireless facilities in compliance with applicable codes.
- (6) Eligible facilities request. – A request for modification of an existing wireless tower or base station that involves collocation of new transmission equipment or replacement of transmission equipment but does not include a substantial modification.
- (7) Equipment compound. – An area surrounding or near the base of a wireless support structure within which a wireless facility is located.
- (8) Fall zone. – The area in which a wireless support structure may be expected to fall in the event of a structural failure, as measured by engineering standards.
- (9) Land development regulation. – Any ordinance enacted pursuant to this Chapter.
- (10) Search ring. – The area within which a wireless support facility or wireless facility must be located in order to meet service objectives of the wireless service provider using the wireless facility or wireless support structure.
- (11) Substantial modification. – The mounting of a proposed wireless facility on a wireless support structure that substantially changes the physical dimensions of the support structure. A mounting is presumed to be a substantial modification if it meets any one or more of the criteria listed below. The burden is on the local government to demonstrate that a mounting that does not meet the listed criteria constitutes a substantial change to the physical dimensions of the wireless support structure.
  - a. Increasing the existing vertical height of the structure by the greater of (i) more than ten percent (10%) or (ii) the height of one additional antenna array with separation from the nearest existing antenna not to exceed 20 feet.
  - b. Except where necessary to shelter the antenna from inclement weather or to connect the antenna to the tower via cable, adding an appurtenance to the body of a wireless support structure that protrudes horizontally from the edge of the wireless support structure the greater of (i) more than 20 feet or (ii) more than the width of the wireless support structure at the level of the appurtenance.

c. Increasing the square footage of the existing equipment compound by more than 2,500 square feet.

(12) Utility pole. – A structure that is designed for and used to carry lines, cables, or wires for telephone, cable television, or electricity, or to provide lighting.

(13) Water tower. – A water storage tank, a standpipe, or an elevated tank situated on a support structure originally constructed for use as a reservoir or facility to store or deliver water.

(14) Wireless facility. – The set of equipment and network components, exclusive of the underlying wireless support structure or tower, including antennas, transmitters, receivers, base stations, power supplies, cabling, and associated equipment necessary to provide wireless data and wireless telecommunications services to a discrete geographic area.

(15) Wireless support structure. – A new or existing structure, such as a monopole, lattice tower, or guyed tower that is designed to support or capable of supporting wireless facilities. A utility pole is not a wireless support structure.

**"§ 160D-9-32. Local authority.**

A local government may plan for and regulate the siting or modification of wireless support structures and wireless facilities in accordance with land development regulations and in conformity with this Part. Except as expressly stated, nothing in this Part shall limit a local government from regulating applications to construct, modify, or maintain wireless support structures, or construct, modify, maintain, or collocate wireless facilities on a wireless support structure based on consideration of land use, public safety, and zoning considerations, including aesthetics, landscaping, structural design, setbacks, and fall zones, or State and local building code requirements, consistent with the provisions of federal law provided in G.S. 160D-9-30. For purposes of this Part, public safety includes, without limitation, federal, State, and local safety regulations but does not include requirements relating to radio frequency emissions of wireless facilities.

**"§ 160D-9-33. Construction of new wireless support structures or substantial modifications of wireless support structures.**

(a) Any person that proposes to construct a new wireless support structure or substantially modify a wireless support structure within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of a local government must do both of the following:

(1) Submit a completed application with the necessary copies and attachments to the appropriate planning authority.

(2) Comply with any local ordinances concerning land use and any applicable permitting processes.

(b) A local government's review of an application for the placement or construction of a new wireless support structure or substantial modification of a wireless support structure shall only address public safety, land development, or zoning issues. In reviewing an application, the local government may not require information on or evaluate an applicant's business decisions about its designed service, customer demand for its service, or quality of its service to or from a particular area or site. A local government may not require information that concerns the specific need for the wireless support structure, including if the service to be provided from the wireless support structure is to add additional wireless coverage or additional wireless capacity. A local government may not require proprietary, confidential, or other business information to justify the need for the new wireless support structure, including propagation maps and telecommunication traffic studies. In reviewing an application, the local government may review the following:



(1) Applicable public safety, land use, or zoning issues addressed in its adopted regulations, including aesthetics, landscaping, land use based location priorities, structural design, setbacks, and fall zones.

(2) Information or materials directly related to an identified public safety, land development, or zoning issue, including evidence that no existing or previously approved wireless support structure can reasonably be used for the wireless facility placement instead of the construction of a new wireless support structure; that residential, historic, and designated scenic areas cannot be served from outside the area; or that the proposed height of a new wireless support structure or initial wireless facility placement or a proposed height increase of a substantially modified wireless support structure, or replacement wireless support structure is necessary to provide the applicant's designed service.

(3) A local government may require applicants for new wireless facilities to evaluate the reasonable feasibility of collocating new antennas and equipment on an existing wireless support structure or structures within the applicant's search ring. Collocation on an existing wireless support structure is not reasonably feasible if collocation is technically or commercially impractical or the owner of the existing wireless support structure is unwilling to enter into a contract for such use at fair market value. Local governments may require information necessary to determine whether collocation on existing wireless support structures is reasonably feasible.

(c) The local government shall issue a written decision approving or denying an application under this section within a reasonable period of time consistent with the issuance of other development approvals in the case of other applications, each as measured from the time the application is deemed complete.

(d) A local government may fix and charge an application fee, consulting fee, or other fee associated with the submission, review, processing, and approval of an application to site new wireless support structures or to substantially modify wireless support structures or wireless facilities that is based on the costs of the services provided and does not exceed what is usual and customary for such services. Any charges or fees assessed by a local government on account of an outside consultant shall be fixed in advance and incorporated into a permit or application fee and shall be based on the reasonable costs to be incurred by the local government in connection with the regulatory review authorized under this section. The foregoing does not prohibit a local government from imposing additional reasonable and cost-based fees for costs incurred should an applicant amend its application. On request, the amount of the consultant charges incorporated into the permit or application fee shall be separately identified and disclosed to the applicant. The fee imposed by a local government for review of the application may not be used for either of the following:

(1) Travel time or expenses, meals, or overnight accommodations incurred in the review of an application by a consultant or other third party.

(2) Reimbursements for a consultant or other third party based on a contingent fee basis or a results-based arrangement.

(e) The local government may condition approval of an application for a new wireless support structure on the provision of documentation prior to the issuance of a building permit establishing the existence of one or more parties, including the owner of the wireless support structure, who intend to locate wireless facilities on the wireless support structure. A local government shall not deny an initial development approval based on such documentation. A local government may condition a development approval on a requirement to construct facilities within a reasonable period of time, which shall be no less than 24 months.

(f) The local government may not require the placement of wireless support structures or wireless facilities on local government owned or leased property but may develop a process to encourage the placement of wireless support structures or facilities on local government owned or leased property, including an expedited approval process.

(g) This section shall not be construed to limit the provisions or requirements of any historic district or landmark regulation adopted pursuant to this Article.

**"§ 160D-9-34. Collocation and eligible facilities requests of wireless support structures.**

(a) Pursuant to section 6409 of the federal Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, 47 U.S.C. § 1455(a), a local government may not deny and shall approve any eligible facilities request as provided in this section. Nothing in this Part requires an application and approval for routine maintenance or limits the performance of routine maintenance on wireless support structures and facilities, including in-kind replacement of wireless facilities. Routine maintenance includes activities associated with regular and general upkeep of transmission equipment, including the replacement of existing wireless facilities with facilities of the same size. A local government may require an application for collocation or an eligible facilities request.

(b) A collocation or eligible facilities request application is deemed complete unless the local government provides notice that the application is incomplete in writing to the applicant within 45 days of submission or within some other mutually agreed upon time frame. The notice shall identify the deficiencies in the application which, if cured, would make the application complete. A local government may deem an application incomplete if there is insufficient evidence provided to show that the proposed collocation or eligible facilities request will comply with federal, State, and local safety requirements. A local government may not deem an application incomplete for any issue not directly related to the actual content of the application and subject matter of the collocation or eligible facilities request. An application is deemed complete on resubmission if the additional materials cure the deficiencies indicated.

(c) The local government shall issue a written decision approving an eligible facilities request application within 45 days of such application being deemed complete. For a collocation application that is not an eligible facilities request, the local government shall issue its written decision to approve or deny the application within 45 days of the application being deemed complete.

(d) A local government may impose a fee not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for technical consultation and the review of a collocation or eligible facilities request application. The fee must be based on the actual, direct, and reasonable administrative costs incurred for the review, processing, and approval of a collocation application. A local government may engage a third-party consultant for technical consultation and the review of a collocation application. The fee imposed by a local government for the review of the application may not be used for either of the following:

(1) Travel expenses incurred in a third-party's review of a collocation application.

(2) Reimbursement for a consultant or other third party based on a contingent fee basis or results-based arrangement.

**"Part 4. Historic Preservation.**

**"§ 160D-9-40. Legislative findings.**

The historical heritage of our State is one of our most valued and important assets. The conservation and preservation of historic districts and landmarks stabilize and increase property values in their areas and strengthen the overall economy of the State. This Part authorizes local governments within their respective planning and development regulation jurisdictions and by means of listing, regulation, and acquisition:

- (1) To safeguard the heritage of the city or county by preserving any district or landmark therein that embodies important elements of its culture, history, architectural history, or prehistory; and
- (2) To promote the use and conservation of such district or landmark for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of the residents of the city or county and the State as a whole.

**"§ 160D-9-41. Historic Preservation Commission.**

Before it may designate one or more landmarks or historic districts, a local government shall establish or designate a historic preservation commission in accordance with G.S. 160D-3-4.

**"§ 160D-9-42. Powers of the Historic Preservation Commission.**

A preservation commission established pursuant to this Chapter may, within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of the local government:

- (1) Undertake an inventory of properties of historical, prehistorical, architectural, and/or cultural significance;
- (2) Recommend to the governing board areas to be designated by ordinance as "Historic Districts"; and individual structures, buildings, sites, areas, or objects to be designated by ordinance as "Landmarks";
- (3) Acquire by any lawful means the fee or any lesser included interest, including options to purchase, to properties within established districts or to any such properties designated as landmarks; to hold, manage, preserve, restore, and improve such properties, and to exchange or dispose of the property by public or private sale, lease, or otherwise, subject to covenants or other legally binding restrictions which will secure appropriate rights of public access and promote the preservation of the property;
- (4) Restore, preserve, and operate historic properties;
- (5) Recommend to the governing board that designation of any area as a historic district or part thereof, or designation of any building, structure, site, area, or object as a landmark, be revoked or removed for cause;
- (6) Conduct an educational program regarding historic properties and districts within its jurisdiction;
- (7) Cooperate with the State, federal, and local governments in pursuance of the purposes of this Part. The governing board or the commission when authorized by the governing board may contract with the State, or the United States of America, or any agency of either, or with any other organization, provided the terms are not inconsistent with State or federal law;
- (8) Enter, solely in performance of its official duties and only at reasonable times, upon private lands for examination or survey thereof. However, no member, employee, or agent of the commission may enter any private building or structure without the express consent of the owner or occupant thereof;
- (9) Prepare and recommend the official adoption of a preservation element as part of the local government's comprehensive plan;
- (10) Review and act upon proposals for alterations, demolitions, or new construction within historic districts, or for the alteration or demolition of designated landmarks, pursuant to this Part; and
- (11) Negotiate at any time with the owner of a building, structure, site, area, or object for its acquisition or its preservation, when such action is reasonably necessary or appropriate.

**"§ 160D-9-43. Appropriations.**

1 A governing board is authorized to make appropriations to a historic preservation  
2 commission established pursuant to this Chapter in any amount determined necessary for the  
3 expenses of the operation of the commission and may make available any additional amounts  
4 necessary for the acquisition, restoration, preservation, operation, and management of historic  
5 buildings, structures, sites, areas, or objects designated as historic landmarks or within  
6 designated historic districts, or of land on which such buildings or structures are located, or to  
7 which they may be removed.

8 **"§ 160D-9-44. Designation of historic districts.**

9 (a) Any local government may, as part of a zoning regulation adopted pursuant to  
10 Article 7 or as a development regulation enacted or amended pursuant to this Article, designate  
11 and from time to time amend one or more historic districts within the area subject to the  
12 ordinance. Historic districts established pursuant to this Part shall consist of areas which are  
13 deemed to be of special significance in terms of their history, prehistory, architecture, and/or  
14 culture, and to possess integrity of design, setting, materials, feeling, and association.

15 Such ordinance may treat historic districts either as a separate use district classification or  
16 as districts which overlay other zoning districts. Where historic districts are designated as  
17 separate use districts, the zoning regulation may include as uses by right or as special uses  
18 those uses found by the Preservation Commission to have existed during the period sought to  
19 be restored or preserved, or to be compatible with the restoration or preservation of the district.

20 (b) No historic district or districts shall be designated under subsection (a) of this  
21 section until:

22 (1) An investigation and report describing the significance of the buildings,  
23 structures, features, sites, or surroundings included in any such proposed  
24 district, and a description of the boundaries of such district has been  
25 prepared; and

26 (2) The Department of Cultural Resources, acting through the State Historic  
27 Preservation Officer or his or her designee, shall have made an analysis of  
28 and recommendations concerning such report and description of proposed  
29 boundaries. Failure of the department to submit its written analysis and  
30 recommendations to the governing board within 30 calendar days after a  
31 written request for such analysis has been received by the Department of  
32 Cultural Resources shall relieve the governing board of any responsibility  
33 for awaiting such analysis, and the governing board may at any time  
34 thereafter take any necessary action to adopt or amend its zoning regulation.

35 (c) The governing board may also, in its discretion, refer the report and proposed  
36 boundaries under subsection (b) of this section to any local preservation commission or other  
37 interested body for its recommendations prior to taking action to amend the zoning regulation.  
38 With respect to any changes in the boundaries of such district subsequent to its initial  
39 establishment, or the creation of additional districts within the jurisdiction, the investigative  
40 studies and reports required by subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section shall be  
41 prepared by the preservation commission and shall be referred to the local planning board for  
42 its review and comment according to procedures set forth in the zoning regulation. Changes in  
43 the boundaries of an initial district or proposal for additional districts shall also be submitted to  
44 the Department of Cultural Resources in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of  
45 subsection (b) of this section.

46 On receipt of these reports and recommendations, the local government may proceed in the  
47 same manner as would otherwise be required for the adoption or amendment of any appropriate  
48 zoning regulation.

49 (d) The provisions of G.S. 160D-9-10 apply to zoning or other development regulations  
50 pertaining to historic districts, and the authority under G.S. 160D-9-10(b) for the ordinance to  
51 regulate the location or screening of solar collectors may encompass requiring the use of

1 plantings or other measures to ensure that the use of solar collectors is not incongruous with the  
2 special character of the district.

3 **"§ 160D-9-45. Designation of landmarks.**

4 Upon complying with G.S. 160D-9-46, the governing board may adopt and amend or repeal  
5 an ordinance designating one or more historic landmarks. No property shall be recommended  
6 for designation as a historic landmark unless it is deemed and found by the preservation  
7 commission to be of special significance in terms of its historical, prehistorical, architectural, or  
8 cultural importance, and to possess integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials,  
9 feeling, and/or association.

10 The ordinance shall describe each property designated in the ordinance, the name or names  
11 of the owner or owners of the property, those elements of the property that are integral to its  
12 historical, architectural, or prehistorical value, including the land area of the property so  
13 designated, and any other information the governing board deems necessary. For each building,  
14 structure, site, area, or object so designated as a historic landmark, the ordinance shall require  
15 that the waiting period set forth in this Part be observed prior to its demolition. For each  
16 designated landmark, the ordinance may also provide for a suitable sign on the property  
17 indicating that the property has been so designated. If the owner consents, the sign shall be  
18 placed upon the property. If the owner objects, the sign shall be placed on a nearby public  
19 right-of-way.

20 **"§ 160D-9-46. Required landmark designation procedures.**

21 As a guide for the identification and evaluation of landmarks, the commission shall  
22 undertake, at the earliest possible time and consistent with the resources available to it, an  
23 inventory of properties of historical, architectural, prehistorical, and cultural significance within  
24 its jurisdiction. Such inventories and any additions or revisions thereof shall be submitted as  
25 expeditiously as possible to the Office of Archives and History. No ordinance designating a  
26 historic building, structure, site, area, or object as a landmark nor any amendment thereto may  
27 be adopted, nor may any property be accepted or acquired by a preservation commission or the  
28 governing board, until all of the following procedural steps have been taken:

- 29 (1) The preservation commission shall (i) prepare and adopt rules of procedure  
30 and (ii) prepare and adopt principles and guidelines, not inconsistent with  
31 this Part, for altering, restoring, moving, or demolishing properties  
32 designated as landmarks.
- 33 (2) The preservation commission shall make or cause to be made an  
34 investigation and report on the historic, architectural, prehistorical,  
35 educational, or cultural significance of each building, structure, site, area, or  
36 object proposed for designation or acquisition. Such investigation or report  
37 shall be forwarded to the Office of Archives and History, North Carolina  
38 Department of Cultural Resources.
- 39 (3) The Department of Cultural Resources, acting through the State Historic  
40 Preservation Officer shall, upon request of the department or at the initiative  
41 of the preservation commission, be given an opportunity to review and  
42 comment upon the substance and effect of the designation of any landmark  
43 pursuant to this Part. Any comments shall be provided in writing. If the  
44 Department does not submit its comments or recommendation in connection  
45 with any designation within 30 days following receipt by the Department of  
46 the investigation and report of the commission, the preservation commission  
47 and any governing board shall be relieved of any responsibility to consider  
48 such comments.
- 49 (4) The preservation commission and the governing board shall hold a joint  
50 legislative hearing or separate legislative hearings on the proposed



ordinance. Notice of the hearing shall be made as provided by G.S. 160D-6-1.

(5) Following the hearings, the governing board may adopt the ordinance as proposed, adopt the ordinance with any amendments it deems necessary, or reject the proposed ordinance.

(6) Upon adoption of the ordinance, the owners and occupants of each designated landmark shall be given written notice of such designation within a reasonable time. One copy of the ordinance and all amendments thereto shall be filed by the preservation commission in the office of the Register of Deeds of the county in which the landmark or landmarks are located. In the case of any landmark property lying within the planning and development jurisdiction of a city, a second copy of the ordinance and all amendments thereto shall be kept on file in the office of the city or town clerk and be made available for public inspection at any reasonable time. A third copy of the ordinance and any amendments shall be given to the local government building inspector. The fact that a building, structure, site, area, or object has been designated a landmark shall be clearly indicated on all tax maps maintained by the local government for such period as the designation remains in effect.

(7) Upon the adoption of the landmarks ordinance or any amendment thereto, it shall be the duty of the preservation commission to give notice thereof to the tax supervisor of the county in which the property is located. The designation and any recorded restrictions upon the property limiting its use for preservation purposes shall be considered by the tax supervisor in appraising it for tax purposes.

**"§ 160D-9-47. Certificate of appropriateness required.**

(a) Certificate Required. From and after the designation of a landmark or a historic district, no exterior portion of any building or other structure, including masonry walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, and pavement, or other appurtenant features, nor above-ground utility structure nor any type of outdoor advertising sign shall be erected, altered, restored, moved, or demolished on such landmark or within such district until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to exterior features has been submitted to and approved by the preservation commission. The local government shall require such a certificate to be issued by the commission prior to the issuance of a building permit granted for the purposes of constructing, altering, moving, or demolishing structures, which certificate may be issued subject to reasonable conditions necessary to carry out the purposes of this Part. A certificate of appropriateness shall be required whether or not a building or other permit is required.

For purposes of this Part, "exterior features" shall include the architectural style, general design, and general arrangement of the exterior of a building or other structure, including the kind and texture of the building material, the size and scale of the building, and the type and style of all windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, and other appurtenant fixtures. In the case of outdoor advertising signs, "exterior features" shall be construed to mean the style, material, size, and location of all such signs. Such "exterior features" may, in the discretion of the local governing board, include historic signs, color, and significant landscape, archaeological, and natural features of the area.

Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the commission shall have no jurisdiction over interior arrangement. The commission shall take no action under this section except to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, moving, or demolition of buildings, structures, appurtenant fixtures, outdoor advertising signs, or other significant features in the district which would be incongruous with the special character of the landmark

or district. In making decisions on certificates of appropriateness, the commission shall apply the rules and standards adopted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

(b) Interior Spaces. Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, jurisdiction of the commission over interior spaces shall be limited to specific interior features of architectural, artistic, or historical significance in publicly owned landmarks, and of privately owned historic landmarks for which consent for interior review has been given by the owner. Said consent of an owner for interior review shall bind future owners and/or successors in title, provided such consent has been filed in the office of the Register of Deeds of the county in which the property is located and indexed according to the name of the owner of the property in the grantee and grantor indexes. The landmark designation shall specify the interior features to be reviewed and the specific nature of the commission's jurisdiction over the interior.

(c) Rules And Standards. Prior to any action to enforce a landmark or historic district ordinance, the commission shall (i) prepare and adopt rules of procedure and (ii) prepare and adopt principles and standards not inconsistent with this Part to guide the commission in determining congruity with the special character of the landmark or district for new construction, alterations, additions, moving, and demolition. The landmark or historic district ordinance may provide, subject to prior adoption by the preservation commission of detailed standards, for staff review and approval as an administrative decision of applications for a certificate of appropriateness for minor work or activity as defined by ordinance; provided, however, that no application for a certificate of appropriateness may be denied without formal action by the preservation commission. Other than these administrative decisions on minor works, decisions on certificates of appropriateness are quasi-judicial and shall follow the procedures of G.S. 160D-4-6.

(d) Time for Review. All applications for certificates of appropriateness shall be reviewed and acted upon within a reasonable time, not to exceed 180 days from the date the application for a certificate of appropriateness is filed, as defined by the ordinance or the commission's rules of procedure. As part of its review procedure, the commission may view the premises and seek the advice of the Division of Archives and History or such other expert advice as it may deem necessary under the circumstances.

(e) Appeals. Appeals of administrative decisions allowed by ordinance may be made to the commission. All decisions of the commission in granting or denying a certificate of appropriateness may be appealed to the board of adjustment in the nature of certiorari within times prescribed for appeals of administrative decisions in G.S. 160D-4-5(c). Appeals from the board of adjustment may be made pursuant to G.S. 160D-14-1. Petitions for judicial review shall be taken within times prescribed for appeal of quasi-judicial decisions in G.S. 160D-14-4. Appeals in any such case shall be heard by the superior court of the county in which the local government is located.

(f) Public Buildings. All of the provisions of this Part are hereby made applicable to construction, alteration, moving, and demolition by the State of North Carolina, its political subdivisions, agencies, and instrumentalities, provided, however, they shall not apply to interiors of buildings or structures owned by the State of North Carolina. The State and its agencies shall have a right of appeal to the North Carolina Historical Commission or any successor agency assuming its responsibilities under G.S. 121-12(a) from any decision of a local preservation commission. The North Carolina Historical Commission shall render its decision within 30 days from the date that the notice of appeal by the State is received by it. The current edition of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings shall be the sole principles and guidelines used in reviewing applications of the State for certificates of appropriateness. The decision of the North Carolina Historical Commission shall be final and binding upon both the State and the preservation commission.

**"§ 160D-9-48. Certain changes not prohibited.**

Nothing in this Part shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature in a historic district or of a landmark which does not involve a change in design, material, or appearance thereof, nor to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, moving, or demolition of any such feature which the building inspector or similar official shall certify is required by the public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition. Nothing in this Part shall be construed to prevent a property owner from making any use of his property that is not prohibited by other law. Nothing in this Part shall be construed to prevent (i) the maintenance or, (ii) in the event of an emergency, the immediate restoration of any existing above-ground utility structure without approval by the preservation commission.

**"§ 160D-9-49. Delay in demolition of landmarks and buildings within historic district.**

(a) An application for a certificate of appropriateness authorizing the relocation, demolition, or destruction of a designated landmark or a building, structure, or site within the district may not be denied except as provided in subsection (c) of this section. However, the effective date of such a certificate may be delayed for a period of up to 365 days from the date of approval. The maximum period of delay authorized by this section shall be reduced by the preservation commission where it finds that the owner would suffer extreme hardship or be permanently deprived of all beneficial use of or return from such property by virtue of the delay. During such period the preservation commission shall negotiate with the owner and with any other parties in an effort to find a means of preserving the building or site. If the preservation commission finds that a building or site within a district has no special significance or value toward maintaining the character of the district, it shall waive all or part of such period and authorize earlier demolition or removal.

If the preservation commission or planning board has voted to recommend designation of a property as a landmark or designation of an area as a district, and final designation has not been made by the governing board, the demolition or destruction of any building, site, or structure located on the property of the proposed landmark or in the proposed district may be delayed by the preservation commission or planning board for a period of up to 180 days or until the local governing board takes final action on the designation, whichever occurs first.

(b) The governing board may enact an ordinance to prevent the demolition by neglect of any designated landmark or any building or structure within an established historic district. Such ordinance shall provide appropriate safeguards to protect property owners from undue economic hardship.

(c) An application for a certificate of appropriateness authorizing the demolition or destruction of a building, site, or structure determined by the State Historic Preservation Officer as having statewide significance as defined in the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places may be denied except where the preservation commission finds that the owner would suffer extreme hardship or be permanently deprived of all beneficial use or return by virtue of the denial.

**"§ 160D-9-50. Demolition by neglect to contributing structures outside local historic districts.**

Notwithstanding G.S. 160D-9-49 or any other provision of law, the governing board may apply its demolition-by-neglect ordinances to contributing structures located outside the local historic district within an adjacent central business district. The governing board may modify and revise its demolition by neglect ordinances as necessary to implement this section and to further its intent. This section is applicable to any local government, provided such local government (i) has designated portions of the central business district and its adjacent historic district as an Urban Progress Zone as defined in G.S. 143B-437.09 and (ii) is recognized by the State Historic Preservation Office and the U.S. Department of the Interior as a Certified Local Government in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended

(16 U.S.C. § 470, et seq.), and the applicable federal regulations (36 C.F.R. Part 61) but is located in a county that has not received the same certification.

**"§ 160D-9-51. Conflict with other laws.**

Whenever any ordinance adopted pursuant to this Part requires a longer waiting period or imposes other higher standards with respect to a designated historic landmark or district than are established under any other statute, charter provision, or regulation, this Part shall govern. Whenever the provisions of any other statute, charter provision, ordinance, or regulation require a longer waiting period or impose other higher standards than are established under this Part, such other statute, charter provision, ordinance, or regulation shall govern.

**"Part 5. Community Appearance.**

**"§ 160D-9-60. Powers and duties of commission.**

A community appearance commission shall make careful study of the visual problems and needs of the local government within its planning and development regulation jurisdiction and shall make any plans and carry out any programs that will, in accordance with the provisions of this Part, enhance and improve the visual quality and aesthetic characteristics of the local government. To this end, the governing board may confer upon the appearance commission the following powers and duties:

- (1) To initiate, promote, and assist in the implementation of programs of general community beautification in the local government;
- (2) To coordinate the activities of individuals, agencies, and organizations, public and private, whose plans, activities, and programs bear upon the appearance of the local government;
- (3) To provide leadership and guidance in matters of area or community design and appearance to individuals, and to public and private organizations, and agencies;
- (4) To make studies of the visual characteristics and problems of the local government, including surveys and inventories of an appropriate nature, and to recommend standards and policies of design for the entire area, any portion or neighborhood thereof, or any project to be undertaken;
- (5) To prepare both general and specific plans for the improved appearance of the local government. These plans may include the entire area or any part thereof, and may include private as well as public property. The plans shall set forth desirable standards and goals for the aesthetic enhancement of the local government or any part thereof within its area of planning and development regulation jurisdiction, including public ways and areas, open spaces, and public and private buildings and projects;
- (6) To participate, in any way deemed appropriate by the governing board of the local government and specified in the ordinance establishing the commission, in the implementation of its plans. To this end, the governing board may include in the ordinance the following powers:
  - a. To request from the proper officials of any public agency or body, including agencies of the State and its political subdivisions, its plans for public buildings, facilities, or projects to be located within the local government's area of planning and development regulation.
  - b. To review these plans and to make recommendations regarding their aesthetic suitability to the appropriate agency or to the planning or governing board. All plans shall be reviewed by the commission in a prompt and expeditious manner, and all recommendations of the commission with regard to any public project shall be made in writing. Copies of the recommendations shall be transmitted

promptly to the planning or governing board and to the appropriate agency.

- c. To formulate and recommend to the appropriate planning or governing board the adoption or amendment of ordinances, including zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, and other local development regulations, that will, in the opinion of the commission, serve to enhance the appearance of the city or county and surrounding areas.
- d. To direct the attention of local government officials to needed enforcement of any ordinance that may in any way affect the appearance of the city or county.
- e. To seek voluntary adherence to the standards and policies of its plans.
- f. To enter, in the performance of its official duties and at reasonable times, upon private lands and make examinations or surveys.
- g. To promote public interest in and an understanding of its recommendations, studies, and plans, and to that end to prepare, publish, and distribute to the public such studies and reports as will, in the opinion of the commission, advance the cause of improved appearance.
- h. To conduct public meetings and hearings, giving reasonable notice to the public thereof.

**"§ 160D-9-61. Staff services; advisory council.**

The commission may recommend to the governing board suitable arrangements for the procurement or provision of staff or technical services for the commission, and the governing board may appropriate such amount as it deems necessary to carry out the purposes for which it was created. The commission may establish an advisory council or other committees.

**"§ 160D-9-62. Annual report.**

The commission shall, no later than April 15 of each year, submit to the governing board a written report of its activities, a statement of its expenditures to date for the current fiscal year, and its requested budget for the next fiscal year. All accounts and funds of the commission shall be administered substantially in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Fiscal Control Act or the County Fiscal Control Act.

**"§ 160D-9-63. Receipt and expenditure of funds.**

The commission may receive contributions from private agencies, foundations, organizations, individuals, the State or federal government, or any other source, in addition to any sums appropriated for its use by the governing board. It may accept and disburse these funds for any purpose within the scope of its authority as herein specified. All sums appropriated by the local government to further the work and purposes of the commission are deemed to be for a public purpose.

**"Article 10.**

**"Development Agreements.**

**"§ 160D-10-1. Authorization for development agreements.**

**(a) The General Assembly finds:**

- (1) Large-scale development projects often occur in multiple phases over several years, requiring a long-term commitment of both public and private resources.
- (2) Such large-scale developments often create community impacts and opportunities that are difficult to accommodate within traditional zoning processes.



(3) Because of their scale and duration, such large-scale projects often require careful coordination of public capital facilities planning, financing, and construction schedules and phasing of the private development.

(4) Because of their scale and duration, such large-scale projects involve substantial commitments of private capital, which developers are usually unwilling to risk without sufficient assurances that development standards will remain stable through the extended period of the development.

(5) Because of their size and duration, such developments often permit communities and developers to experiment with different or nontraditional types of development concepts and standards, while still managing impacts on the surrounding areas.

(6) To better structure and manage development approvals for such large-scale developments and ensure their proper integration into local capital facilities programs, local governments need flexibility to negotiate such developments.

(b) Local governments may enter into development agreements with developers, subject to the procedures of this Article. In entering into such agreements, a local government may not exercise any authority or make any commitment not authorized by general or local act and may not impose any tax or fee not authorized by otherwise applicable law.

(c) This Article is supplemental to the powers conferred upon local governments and does not preclude or supersede rights and obligations established pursuant to other law regarding development approvals, site-specific vesting plans, phased vesting plans, or other provisions of law. A development agreement shall not exempt the property owner or developer from compliance with the State Building Code or State or local housing codes that are not part of the local government's development regulations.

(d) Development authorized by a development agreement shall comply with all applicable laws, including all ordinances, resolutions, regulations, permits, policies, and laws affecting the development of property, including laws governing permitted uses of the property, density, intensity, design, and improvements.

#### **"§ 160D-10-2. Definitions.**

The following definitions apply in this Article:

(1) Development. – The planning for or carrying out of a building activity, the making of a material change in the use or appearance of any structure or property, or the dividing of land into two or more parcels. When appropriate to the context, "development" refers to the planning for or the act of developing or to the result of development. Reference to a specific operation is not intended to mean that the operation or activity, when part of other operations or activities, is not development. Reference to particular operations is not intended to limit the generality of this item.

(2) Public facilities. – Major capital improvements, including, but not limited to, transportation, sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water, educational, parks and recreational, and health systems and facilities.

#### **"§ 160D-10-3. Approval of governing board required.**

A local government may establish procedures and requirements, as provided in this Article, to consider and enter into development agreements with developers. A development agreement must be approved by the governing board of a local government following the procedures specified in G.S. 160D-10-5. No protest petition under G.S. 160D-6-3 is applicable to a development agreement. A development agreement may be considered concurrently with a zoning map or text amendment affecting the property and development subject to the development agreement.

#### **"§ 160D-10-4. Size and duration.**

(a) A local government may enter into a development agreement with a developer for the development of property as provided in this Article, provided the property contains 25 acres or more of developable property (exclusive of wetlands, mandatory buffers, unbuildable slopes, and other portions of the property which may be precluded from development at the time of application).

(b) Notwithstanding the acreage requirements of subsection (a) of this section, a local government may enter into a development agreement with a developer for developable property of any size if the property that would be subject to the development agreement is (i) subject to an executed brownfields agreement pursuant to Part 5 of Article 9 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes; or (ii) within or adjacent to a central business district and the governing board determines the development would have a substantial effect on the character or function of the central business district.

(c) Development agreements may be of any reasonable term specified in the agreement.

(d) The entire development agreement, or any terms or conditions within the development agreement, may be incorporated directly or by reference into the conditions of a conditional zoning district. If incorporated into a conditional district, the provisions shall be treated as any other zoning conditions in the event of the developer's bankruptcy.

**"§ 160D-10-5. Public hearing.**

Before entering into a development agreement, a local government shall conduct a legislative hearing on the proposed agreement. The notice provisions of G.S. 160D-6-2 applicable to zoning map amendments shall be followed for this hearing. The notice for the public hearing must specify the location of the property subject to the development agreement, the development uses proposed on the property, and must specify a place where a copy of the proposed development agreement can be obtained.

**"§ 160D-10-6 Content and modification.**

(a) A development agreement shall, at a minimum, include all of the following:

- (1) A description of the property subject to the agreement and the names of its legal and equitable property owners.
- (2) The duration of the agreement. However, the parties are not precluded from entering into subsequent development agreements that may extend the original duration period.
- (3) The development uses permitted on the property, including population densities and building types, intensities, placement on the site, and design.
- (4) A description of public facilities that will serve the development, including who provides the facilities, the date any new public facilities, if needed, will be constructed, and a schedule to assure public facilities are available concurrent with the impacts of the development. In the event that the development agreement provides that the local government shall provide certain public facilities, the development agreement shall provide that the delivery date of such public facilities will be tied to successful performance by the developer in implementing the proposed development.
- (5) A description, where appropriate, of any reservation or dedication of land for public purposes and any provisions agreed to by the developer that exceed existing laws related to protection of environmentally sensitive property.
- (6) A description of any conditions, terms, restrictions, or other requirements for the protection of public health, safety, or welfare.
- (7) A description, where appropriate, of any provision for the preservation and restoration of historic structures.

(b) A development agreement may also provide that the entire development or any phase of it be commenced or completed within a specified period of time. If required by ordinance or in the agreement, the development agreement shall provide a development

1 schedule, including commencement dates and interim completion dates at no greater than  
2 five-year intervals; provided, however, the failure to meet a commencement or completion date  
3 shall not constitute a material breach of the development agreement pursuant to  
4 G.S. 160D-10-8 but must be judged based upon the totality of the circumstances. The developer  
5 may request a modification in the dates as set forth in the agreement.

6 (c) If more than one local government is made party to an agreement, the agreement  
7 must specify which local government is responsible for the overall administration of the  
8 development agreement. A local or regional utility authority may also be made a party to the  
9 development agreement.

10 (d) The development agreement also may cover any other matter, including defined  
11 performance standards, not inconsistent with this Chapter. The development agreement may  
12 include mutually acceptable terms regarding provision of public facilities and other amenities  
13 and the allocation of financial responsibility for their provision, provided any impact mitigation  
14 measures offered by the developer beyond those that could be required by the local government  
15 pursuant to G.S. 160D-8-4 shall be expressly enumerated within the agreement, and provided  
16 the agreement may not include a tax or fee not otherwise authorized by law.

17 (e) Consideration of a proposed major modification of the agreement shall follow the  
18 same procedures as required for initial approval of a development agreement. What changes  
19 constitute a major modification may be determined by ordinance adopted pursuant to  
20 G.S. 160D-10-3 or as provided for in the development agreement.

21 **"§ 160D-10-7. Vesting.**

22 (a) Unless the development agreement specifically provides for the application of  
23 subsequently enacted laws, the laws applicable to development of the property subject to a  
24 development agreement are those in force at the time of execution of the agreement.

25 (b) Except for grounds specified in G.S. 160D-1-8, a local government may not apply  
26 subsequently adopted ordinances or development policies to a development that is subject to a  
27 development agreement.

28 (c) In the event State or federal law is changed after a development agreement has been  
29 entered into and the change prevents or precludes compliance with one or more provisions of  
30 the development agreement, the local government may modify the affected provisions, upon a  
31 finding that the change in State or federal law has a fundamental effect on the development  
32 agreement.

33 (d) This section does not abrogate vested rights otherwise preserved by law.

34 **"§ 160D-10-8. Breach and cure.**

35 (a) Procedures established pursuant to G.S. 160D-10-3 may include a provision  
36 requiring periodic review by the zoning administrator or other appropriate officer of the local  
37 government at which time the developer shall demonstrate good faith compliance with the  
38 terms of the development agreement.

39 (b) If the local government finds and determines that the developer has committed a  
40 material breach of the agreement, the local government shall notify the developer in writing  
41 setting forth with reasonable particularity the nature of the breach and the evidence supporting  
42 the finding and determination, and providing the developer a reasonable time in which to cure  
43 the material breach.

44 (c) If the developer fails to cure the material breach within the time given, then the local  
45 government unilaterally may terminate or modify the development agreement; provided the  
46 notice of termination or modification may be appealed to the board of adjustment in the manner  
47 provided by G.S. 160D-4-5.

48 (d) An ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 160D-10-3 or the development agreement  
49 may specify other penalties for breach in lieu of termination, including, but not limited to,  
50 penalties allowed for violation of a development regulation. Nothing in this Article shall be  
51 construed to abrogate or impair the power of local government to enforce applicable law.

(e) A development agreement shall be enforceable by any party to the agreement notwithstanding any changes in the development regulations made subsequent to the effective date of the development agreement. Any party to the agreement may file an action for injunctive relief to enforce the terms of a development agreement.

**"§ 160D-10-9. Amendment or termination.**

Subject to the provisions of G.S. 160D-10-6(e), a development agreement may be amended or terminated by mutual consent of the parties.

**"§ 160-10-10. Change of jurisdiction.**

(a) Except as otherwise provided by this Article, any development agreement entered into by a local government before the effective date of a change of jurisdiction shall be valid for the duration of the agreement or eight years from the effective date of the change in jurisdiction, whichever is earlier. The parties to the development agreement and the local government assuming jurisdiction have the same rights and obligations with respect to each other regarding matters addressed in the development agreement as if the property had remained in the previous jurisdiction.

(b) A local government assuming jurisdiction may modify or suspend the provisions of the development agreement if the local government determines that the failure of the local government to do so would place the residents of the territory subject to the development agreement or the residents of the local government, or both, in a condition dangerous to their health or safety, or both.

**"§ 160D-10-11. Recordation.**

The developer shall record the agreement with the register of deeds in the county where the property is located within 14 days after the local government and developer execute an approved development agreement. No development approvals may be issued until the development agreement has been recorded. The burdens of the development agreement are binding upon, and the benefits of the agreement shall inure to, all successors in interest to the parties to the agreement.

**"§ 160D-10-12. Applicability of procedures to approve debt.**

In the event that any of the obligations of the local government in the development agreement constitute debt, the local government shall comply, at the time of the obligation to incur the debt and before the debt becomes enforceable against the local government, with any applicable constitutional and statutory procedures for the approval of this debt.

**"Article 11.**

**"Building Code Enforcement.**

**"§ 160D-11-1. Building defined.**

As used in this Article, the words

(a) "Building" or "buildings" include other structures.

(b) "Governing board" or "board of commissioners" includes the Tribal Council of a federally recognized Indian Tribe.

(c) "Local government" also means a federally recognized Indian Tribe, and as to such tribe includes lands held in trust for the tribe.

(d) "Public officer" means the officer or officers who are authorized by ordinances adopted hereunder to exercise the powers prescribed by the ordinances and by this Article.

**"§ 160D-11-2. Building code administration.**

A local government may create an inspection department and may appoint inspectors who may be given appropriate titles, such as building inspector, electrical inspector, plumbing inspector, housing inspector, zoning inspector, heating and air-conditioning inspector, fire prevention inspector, or deputy or assistant inspector, or such other titles as may be generally descriptive of the duties assigned. Every local government shall perform the duties and responsibilities set forth in G.S. 160D-11-5 either by: (i) creating its own inspection department; (ii) creating a joint inspection department in cooperation with one or more other

units of local government, pursuant to G.S. 160D-11-5 or Part 1 of Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes; (iii) contracting with another unit of local government for the provision of inspection services pursuant to Part 1 of Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes; or (iv) arranging for the county in which a city is located to perform inspection services within the city's jurisdiction as authorized by G.S. 160D-11-5 and G.S. 160D-2-2.

In the event that any local government fails to provide inspection services or ceases to provide such services, the Commissioner of Insurance shall arrange for the provision of such services, either through personnel employed by the department or through an arrangement with other units of government. In either event, the Commissioner shall have and may exercise within the local government's jurisdiction all powers made available to the governing board with respect to building inspection under this Article and Part 1 of Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes. Whenever the Commissioner has intervened in this manner, the local government may assume provision of inspection services only after giving the Commissioner two years' written notice of its intention to do so; provided, however, that the Commissioner may waive this requirement or permit assumption at an earlier date upon finding that such earlier assumption will not unduly interfere with arrangements made for the provision of those services.

**"§ 160D-11-3. Qualifications of inspectors.**

No local government shall employ an inspector to enforce the State Building Code who does not have one of the following types of certificates issued by the North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board attesting to the inspector's qualifications to hold such position: (i) a probationary certificate; (ii) a standard certificate; or (iii) a limited certificate which shall be valid only as an authorization to continue in the position held on the date specified in G.S. 143-151.13(c) and which shall become invalid if the inspector does not successfully complete in-service training specified by the Qualification Board within the period specified in G.S. 143-151.13(c). An inspector holding one of the above certificates can be promoted to a position requiring a higher level certificate only upon issuance by the Board of a standard certificate or probationary certificate appropriate for such new position.

**"§ 160D-11-4. Duties and responsibilities.**

(a) The duties and responsibilities of an inspection department and of the inspectors in it shall be to enforce within their planning and development regulation jurisdiction State and local laws relating to:

- (1) The construction of buildings and other structures.
- (2) The installation of such facilities as plumbing systems, electrical systems, heating systems, refrigeration systems, and air-conditioning systems.
- (3) The maintenance of buildings and other structures in a safe, sanitary, and healthful condition.
- (4) Other matters that may be specified by the governing board.

These duties shall include the receipt of applications for permits and the issuance or denial of permits, the making of any necessary inspections, the issuance or denial of certificates of compliance, the issuance of orders to correct violations, the bringing of judicial actions against actual or threatened violations, the keeping of adequate records, and any other actions that may be required in order adequately to enforce those laws. The city council shall have the authority to enact reasonable and appropriate provisions governing the enforcement of those laws.

(b) Except as provided in G.S. 160D-11-15 and G.S. 160D-12-7, a local government may not adopt a local ordinance or resolution or any other policy that requires regular, routine inspections of buildings or structures constructed in compliance with the North Carolina Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings in addition to the specific inspections required by the North Carolina Building Code without first obtaining approval from the North Carolina Building Code Council. The North Carolina Building Code Council shall review all applications for additional inspections requested by a local government and shall, in a



reasonable manner, approve or disapprove the additional inspections. This subsection does not limit the authority of the local government to require inspections upon unforeseen or unique circumstances that require immediate action.

**"§ 160D-11-5. Other arrangements for inspections.**

A local government may contract with an individual who is not a local government employee but who holds one of the applicable certificates as provided in G.S. 160D-11-3 or with the employer of an individual who holds one of the applicable certificates as provided in G.S. 160D-11-3. Inspections of dwellings shall follow the provisions of G.S. 160D-12-7.

**"§ 160D-11-6. Conflicts of interest.**

Staff members, agents, or contractors responsible for inspections shall comply with G.S. 160D-1-9(c). No member of an inspection department shall be financially interested or employed by a business that is financially interested in the furnishing of labor, material, or appliances for the construction, alteration, or maintenance of any building within the local government's planning and development regulation jurisdiction or any part or system thereof, or in the making of plans or specifications therefor, unless he or she is the owner of the building. No member of an inspection department or other individual or an employee of a company contracting with a local government to conduct building inspections shall engage in any work that is inconsistent with his or her duties or with the interest of the local government, as determined by the local government. The local government must find a conflict of interest if any of the following is the case:

- (1) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform building inspections for the local government has worked for the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected within the last two years.
- (2) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform building inspections for the local government is closely related to the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected.
- (3) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform building inspections for the local government has a financial or business interest in the project to be inspected.

The provisions of this section do not apply to a firefighter whose primary duties are fire suppression and rescue, but who engages in some fire inspection activities as a secondary responsibility of the firefighter's employment as a firefighter, except no firefighter may inspect any work actually done, or materials or appliances supplied, by the firefighter or the firefighter's business within the preceding six years.

**"§ 160D-11-7. Failure to perform duties.**

If any member of an inspection department shall willfully fail to perform the duties required of him by law, or willfully shall improperly issue a permit, or shall give a certificate of compliance without first making the inspections required by law, or willfully shall improperly give a certificate of compliance, the member shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

**"§ 160D-11-8. Building permits.**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, no person shall commence or proceed with any of the following without first securing all permits required by the State Building Code and any other State or local laws applicable to the work:

- (1) The construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, movement to another site, removal, or demolition of any building or structure.
- (2) The installation, extension, or general repair of any plumbing system except that in any one- or two-family dwelling unit a permit shall not be required for the connection of a water heater that is being replaced, provided that the work is performed by a person licensed under G.S. 87-21, who personally

examines the work at completion and ensures that a leak test has been performed on the gas piping, and provided the energy use rate or thermal input is not greater than that of the water heater which is being replaced, there is no change in fuel, energy source, location, capacity, or routing or sizing of venting and piping, and the replacement is installed in accordance with the current edition of the State Building Code.

(3) The installation, extension, alteration, or general repair of any heating or cooling equipment system.

(4) The installation, extension, alteration, or general repair of any electrical wiring, devices, appliances, or equipment except that in any one- or two-family dwelling unit a permit shall not be required for repair or replacement of electrical lighting fixtures or devices, such as receptacles and lighting switches, or for the connection of an existing branch circuit to an electric water heater that is being replaced, provided that all of the following requirements are met:

a. With respect to electric water heaters, the replacement water heater is placed in the same location and is of the same or less capacity and electrical rating as the original.

b. With respect to electrical lighting fixtures and devices, the replacement is with a fixture or device having the same voltage and the same or less amperage.

c. The work is performed by a person licensed under G.S. 87-43.

d. The repair or replacement installation meets the current edition of the State Building Code, including the State Electrical Code.

However, a building permit is not required for the installation, maintenance, or replacement of any load control device or equipment by an electric power supplier, as defined in G.S. 62-133.8, or an electrical contractor contracted by the electric power supplier, so long as the work is subject to supervision by an electrical contractor licensed under Article 4 of Chapter 87 of the General Statutes. The electric power supplier shall provide such installation, maintenance, or replacement in accordance with (i) an activity or program ordered, authorized, or approved by the North Carolina Utilities Commission pursuant to G.S. 62-133.8 or G.S. 62-133.9 or (ii) a similar program undertaken by a municipal electric service provider, whether the installation, modification, or replacement is made before or after the point of delivery of electric service to the customer. The exemption under this subdivision applies to all existing installations.

(b) A building permit shall be in writing and shall contain a provision that the work done shall comply with the State Building Code and all other applicable State and local laws. Nothing in this section shall require a local government to review and approve residential building plans submitted to the local government pursuant to the North Carolina Residential Code, provided that the local government may review and approve such residential building plans as it deems necessary. No building permits shall be issued unless the plans and specifications are identified by the name and address of the author thereof, and if the General Statutes of North Carolina require that plans for certain types of work be prepared only by a registered architect or registered engineer, no building permit shall be issued unless the plans and specifications bear the North Carolina seal of a registered architect or of a registered engineer. When any provision of the General Statutes of North Carolina or of any ordinance requires that work be done by a licensed specialty contractor of any kind, no permit for the work shall be issued unless the work is to be performed by such a duly licensed contractor. No permit issued under Articles 9 or 9C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes shall be required for any construction, installation, repair, replacement, or alteration costing five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or less in any single-family residence or farm building unless the work involves the

1 addition, repair, or replacement of load-bearing structures; the addition (excluding replacement  
2 of same size and capacity) or change in the design of plumbing; the addition, replacement, or  
3 change in the design of heating, air-conditioning, or electrical wiring, devices, appliances, or  
4 equipment; the use of materials not permitted by the North Carolina Uniform Residential  
5 Building Code; or the addition (excluding replacement of like grade of fire resistance) of  
6 roofing. Violation of this section shall constitute a Class 1 misdemeanor.

7 (c) A local government shall not require more than one building permit for the  
8 complete installation or replacement of any natural gas, propane gas, or electrical appliance on  
9 an existing structure when the installation or replacement is performed by a person licensed  
10 under G.S. 87-21 or G.S. 87-43. The cost of the building permit for such work shall not exceed  
11 the cost of any one individual trade permit issued by that local government, nor shall the local  
12 government increase the costs of any fees to offset the loss of revenue caused by this provision.

13 (d) No building permit shall be issued pursuant to subsection (a) of this section for any  
14 land-disturbing activity, as defined in G.S. 113A-52(6), or for any activity covered by  
15 G.S. 113A-57, unless an erosion and sedimentation control plan for the site of the activity or a  
16 tract of land, including the site of the activity has been approved under the Sedimentation  
17 Pollution Control Act.

18 (e) No building permit shall be issued pursuant to subsection (a) of this section for any  
19 land-disturbing activity that is subject to, but does not comply with, the requirements of  
20 G.S. 113A-71.

21 (f) No building permit shall be issued pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of  
22 this section where the cost of the work is thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) or more, other than  
23 for improvements to an existing single-family residential dwelling unit as defined in  
24 G.S. 87-15.5(7) that the owner occupies as a residence, or for the addition of an accessory  
25 building or accessory structure as defined in the North Carolina Uniform Residential Building  
26 Code, the use of which is incidental to that residential dwelling unit, unless the name, physical  
27 and mailing address, telephone number, facsimile number, and electronic mail address of the  
28 lien agent designated by the owner pursuant to G.S. 44A-11.1(a) is conspicuously set forth in  
29 the permit or in an attachment thereto. The building permit may contain the lien agent's  
30 electronic mail address. The lien agent information for each permit issued pursuant to this  
31 subsection shall be maintained by the inspection department in the same manner and in the  
32 same location in which it maintains its record of building permits issued.

33 **"§ 160D-11-9. Expiration of building permits.**

34 A building permit issued pursuant to this Article shall expire by limitation six months, or  
35 any lesser time fixed by ordinance of the city council, after the date of issuance if the work  
36 authorized by the permit has not been commenced. If after commencement the work is  
37 discontinued for a period of 12 months, the permit therefor shall immediately expire. No work  
38 authorized by any building permit that has expired shall thereafter be performed until a new  
39 permit has been secured.

40 **"§ 160D-11-10. Changes in work.**

41 After a building permit has been issued, no changes or deviations from the terms of the  
42 application, plans, and specifications, or the permit, except where changes or deviations are  
43 clearly permissible under the State Building Code, shall be made until specific written approval  
44 of proposed changes or deviations has been obtained from the inspection department.

45 **"§ 160D-11-10. Inspections of work in progress.**

46 As the work pursuant to a building permit progresses, local inspectors shall make as many  
47 inspections thereof as may be necessary to satisfy them that the work is being done according  
48 to the provisions of any applicable State and local laws and of the terms of the permit. In  
49 exercising this power, members of the inspection department shall have a right to enter on any  
50 premises within the jurisdiction of the department at all reasonable hours for the purposes of  
51 inspection or other enforcement action, upon presentation of proper credentials. If a building

1 permit has been obtained by an owner exempt from licensure under G.S. 87-1(b)(2), no  
2 inspection shall be conducted without the owner being present, unless the plans for the building  
3 were drawn and sealed by an architect licensed pursuant to Chapter 83A of the General  
4 Statutes.

5 **"§ 160D-11-11. Appeals of stop orders.**

6 (a) The owner or builder may appeal from a stop order involving alleged violation of  
7 the State Building Code or any approved local modification thereof to the North Carolina  
8 Commissioner of Insurance or his designee within a period of five days after the order is  
9 issued. Notice of appeal shall be given in writing to the Commissioner of Insurance or his  
10 designee, with a copy to the local inspector. The Commissioner of Insurance or his designee  
11 shall promptly conduct an investigation and the appellant and the inspector shall be permitted  
12 to submit relevant evidence. The Commissioner of Insurance or his designee shall as  
13 expeditiously as possible provide a written statement of the decision setting forth the facts  
14 found, the decision reached, and the reasons for the decision. Pending the ruling by the  
15 Commissioner of Insurance or his designee on an appeal, no further work shall take place in  
16 violation of a stop order. In the event of dissatisfaction with the decision, the person affected  
17 shall have the options of:

18 (1) Appealing to the Building Code Council, or

19 (2) Appealing to the Superior Court as provided in G.S. 143-141.

20 (b) The owner or builder may appeal from a stop order involving alleged violation of a  
21 local development regulation as provided in G.S. 160D-4-5.

22 **"§ 160D-11-13. Revocation of building permits.**

23 The appropriate inspector may revoke and require the return of any building permit by  
24 notifying the permit holder in writing stating the reason for the revocation. Building permits  
25 shall be revoked for any substantial departure from the approved application, plans, or  
26 specifications; for refusal or failure to comply with the requirements of any applicable State or  
27 local laws; or for false statements or misrepresentations made in securing the permit. Any  
28 building permit mistakenly issued in violation of an applicable State or local law may also be  
29 revoked.

30 **"§ 160D-11-14. Certificates of compliance.**

31 At the conclusion of all work done under a building permit, the appropriate inspector shall  
32 make a final inspection, and if the inspector finds that the completed work complies with all  
33 applicable State and local laws and with the terms of the permit, the inspector shall issue a  
34 certificate of compliance. No new building or part thereof may be occupied, no addition or  
35 enlargement of an existing building may be occupied, and no existing building that has been  
36 altered or moved may be occupied, until the inspection department has issued a certificate of  
37 compliance. A temporary certificate of occupancy or compliance may be issued permitting  
38 occupancy for a stated period of time of either the entire building or property or of specified  
39 portions of the building if the inspector finds that such building or property may safely be  
40 occupied prior to its final completion. Violation of this section shall constitute a Class 1  
41 misdemeanor. A local government may require the applicant for a temporary certificate of  
42 occupancy to post suitable security to ensure code compliance.

43 **"§ 160D-11-15. Periodic inspections.**

44 (a) The inspection department may make periodic inspections, subject to the governing  
45 board's directions, for unsafe, unsanitary, or otherwise hazardous and unlawful  
46 conditions in buildings or structures within its planning and development regulation  
47 jurisdiction. In exercising this power, members of the department shall have a right to  
48 enter on any premises within the jurisdiction of the department at all reasonable hours  
49 for the purposes of inspection or other enforcement action, upon presentation of proper  
50 credentials. Inspections of dwellings shall follow the provisions of G.S. 160D-12-7.

**"§ 160D-11-16. Defects in buildings to be corrected.**

When a local inspector finds any defects in a building, or finds that the building has not been constructed in accordance with the applicable State and local laws, or that a building because of its condition is dangerous or contains fire hazardous conditions, it shall be the inspector's duty to notify the owner or occupant of the building of its defects, hazardous conditions, or failure to comply with law. The owner or occupant shall immediately remedy the defects, hazardous conditions, or violations of law in the property.

**"§ 160D-11-17. Unsafe buildings condemned.**

(a) Designation of Unsafe Buildings. Every building that shall appear to the inspector to be especially dangerous to life because of its liability to fire or because of bad condition of walls, overloaded floors, defective construction, decay, unsafe wiring or heating system, inadequate means of egress, or other causes shall be held to be unsafe, and the inspector shall affix a notice of the dangerous character of the structure to a conspicuous place on the exterior wall of the building.

(b) Nonresidential Building or Structure. In addition to the authority granted in subsection (a) of this section, an inspector may declare a nonresidential building or structure within a community development target area to be unsafe if it meets both of the following conditions:

- (1) It appears to the inspector to be vacant or abandoned.
- (2) It appears to the inspector to be in such dilapidated condition as to cause or contribute to blight, disease, vagrancy, fire or safety hazard, to be a danger to children, or to tend to attract persons intent on criminal activities or other activities that would constitute a public nuisance.

(c) Notice Posted on Structure. If an inspector declares a nonresidential building or structure to be unsafe under subsection (b) of this section, the inspector must affix a notice of the unsafe character of the structure to a conspicuous place on the exterior wall of the building. For the purposes of this section, the term "community development target area" means an area that has characteristics of an urban progress zone under G.S. 143B-437.09, a "nonresidential redevelopment area" under G.S. 160A-503(10), or an area with similar characteristics designated by the governing board as being in special need of revitalization for the benefit and welfare of its citizens.

(d) Applicability to Residential Structures. A local government may expand subsections (b) and (c) of this section to apply to residential buildings by adopting an ordinance. Before adopting such an ordinance, a local government shall hold a legislative hearing with published notice as provided by G.S. 160D-6-1.

**"§ 160D-11-18. Removing notice from condemned building.**

If any person shall remove any notice that has been affixed to any building or structure by a local inspector of any municipality and that states the dangerous character of the building or structure, that person shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

**"§ 160D-11-19. Action in event of failure to take corrective action.**

If the owner of a building or structure that has been condemned as unsafe pursuant to G.S. 160A-426 shall fail to take prompt corrective action, the local inspector shall give written notice, by certified mail to the owner's last known address or by personal service:

- (1) That the building or structure is in a condition that appears to meet one or more of the following conditions:
  - a. Constitutes a fire or safety hazard.
  - b. Is dangerous to life, health, or other property.
  - c. Is likely to cause or contribute to blight, disease, vagrancy, or danger to children.
  - d. Has a tendency to attract persons intent on criminal activities or other activities which would constitute a public nuisance.



(2) That an administrative hearing will be held before the inspector at a designated place and time, not later than 10 days after the date of the notice, at which time the owner shall be entitled to be heard in person or by counsel and to present arguments and evidence pertaining to the matter; and

(3) That following the hearing, the inspector may issue such order to repair, close, vacate, or demolish the building or structure as appears appropriate.

If the name or whereabouts of the owner cannot after due diligence be discovered, the notice shall be considered properly and adequately served if a copy is posted on the outside of the building or structure in question at least 10 days prior to the hearing and a notice of the hearing is published in a newspaper having general circulation in the local government's area of jurisdiction at least once not later than one week prior to the hearing.

**"§ 160D-11-20. Order to take corrective action.**

If, upon a hearing held pursuant to the notice prescribed in G.S. 160D-11-19, the inspector shall find that the building or structure is in a condition that constitutes a fire or safety hazard or renders it dangerous to life, health, or other property, the inspector shall make an order in writing, directed to the owner of such building or structure, requiring the owner to remedy the defective conditions by repairing, closing, vacating, or demolishing the building or structure or taking other necessary steps, within such period, not less than 60 days, as the inspector may prescribe; provided that where the inspector finds that there is imminent danger to life or other property, the inspector may order that corrective action be taken in such lesser period as may be feasible.

**"§ 160D-11-21. Appeal; finality of order if not appealed.**

Any owner who has received an order under G.S. 160D-11-20 may appeal from the order to the governing board by giving notice of appeal in writing to the inspector and to the local government clerk within 10 days following issuance of the order. In the absence of an appeal, the order of the inspector shall be final. The governing board shall hear and render a decision in an appeal within a reasonable time. The governing board may affirm, modify and affirm, or revoke the order.

**"§ 160D-11-22. Failure to comply with order.**

If the owner of a building or structure fails to comply with an order issued pursuant to G.S. 160D-11-20 from which no appeal has been taken, or fails to comply with an order of the governing board following an appeal, the owner shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

**"§ 160D-11-23. Enforcement.**

(a) Action Authorized. Whenever any violation is denominated a misdemeanor under the provisions of this Part, the local government, either in addition to or in lieu of other remedies, may initiate any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent, restrain, correct, or abate the violation or to prevent the occupancy of the building or structure involved.

(b) Removal of Building. In the case of a building or structure declared unsafe under G.S. 160D-11-17 or an ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 160D-11-17, a local government may, in lieu of taking action under subsection (a) of this section, cause the building or structure to be removed or demolished. The amounts incurred by the local government in connection with the removal or demolition shall be a lien against the real property upon which the cost was incurred. The lien shall be filed, have the same priority, and be collected in the same manner as liens for special assessments provided in Article 10 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes. If the building or structure is removed or demolished by the local government, the local government shall sell the usable materials of the building and any personal property, fixtures, or appurtenances found in or attached to the building. The local government shall credit the proceeds of the sale against the cost of the removal or demolition. Any balance remaining from the sale shall be deposited with the clerk of superior court of the county where the property is located and shall be disbursed by the court to the person found to be entitled thereto by final order or decree of the court.

(c) Additional Lien. The amounts incurred by a local government in connection with the removal or demolition shall also be a lien against any other real property owned by the owner of the building or structure and located within the local government's planning and development regulation jurisdiction or, for municipalities, within one mile of the city limits, except for the owner's primary residence. The provisions of subsection (b) of this section apply to this additional lien, except that this additional lien is inferior to all prior liens and shall be collected as a money judgment.

(d) Nonexclusive Remedy. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or limit the power of the local government to define and declare nuisances and to cause their removal or abatement by summary proceedings, or otherwise.

**"§ 160D-11-24. Records and reports.**

The inspection department shall keep complete and accurate records in convenient form of all applications received, permits issued, inspections and reinspections made, defects found, certificates of compliance or occupancy granted, and all other work and activities of the department. These records shall be kept in the manner and for the periods prescribed by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. Periodic reports shall be submitted to the governing board and to the Commissioner of Insurance as they shall by ordinance, rule, or regulation require.

**"§ 160D-11-25. Appeals.**

Unless otherwise provided by law, appeals from any order, decision, or determination by a member of a local inspection department pertaining to the State Building Code or other State building laws shall be taken to the Commissioner of Insurance or the Commissioner's designee or other official specified in G.S. 143-139, by filing a written notice with the Commissioner and with the inspection department within a period of 10 days after the order, decision, or determination. Further appeals may be taken to the State Building Code Council or to the courts as provided by law.

**"§ 160D-11-26. Fire limits.**

(a) County Fire Limits. A county may by ordinance establish and define fire limits in any area within the county and not within a city. The limits may include only business and industrial areas. Within any fire limits, no frame or wooden building or addition thereto may be erected, altered, repaired, or moved (either into the fire limits or from one place to another within the limits) except upon the permit of the inspection department and approval of the Commissioner of Insurance. The governing board may make additional regulations necessary for the prevention, extinguishment, or mitigation of fires within the fire limits.

(b) Municipal Fire Limits. The governing board of every incorporated city shall pass one or more ordinances establishing and defining fire limits, which shall include the principal business portions of the city and which shall be known as primary fire limits. In addition, the governing board may, in its discretion, establish and define one or more separate areas within the city as secondary fire limits.

(c) Restrictions Within Municipal Primary Fire Limits. Within the primary fire limits of any city, as established and defined by ordinance, no frame or wooden building or structure or addition thereto shall hereafter be erected, altered, repaired, or moved (either into the limits or from one place to another within the limits), except upon the permit of the local inspection department approved by the governing board and by the Commissioner of Insurance or his designee. The governing board may make additional regulations for the prevention, extinguishment, or mitigation of fires within the primary fire limits.

(d) Restriction Within Municipal Secondary Fire Limits. Within any secondary fire limits of any city or town, as established and defined by ordinance, no frame or wooden building or structure or addition thereto shall be erected, altered, repaired, or moved except in accordance with any rules and regulations established by ordinance of the areas.

(e) Failure to Establish Municipal Primary Fire Limits. If the governing board of any city shall fail or refuse to establish and define the primary fire limits of the city as required by law, after having such failure or refusal called to their attention in writing by the State Commissioner of Insurance, the Commissioner shall have the power to establish the limits upon making a determination that they are necessary and in the public interest.

**"§ 160D-11-27. Ordinance authorized as to repair, closing, and demolition of nonresidential buildings or structures; order of public officer.**

(a) Authority. The governing board of the local government may adopt and enforce ordinances relating to nonresidential buildings or structures that fail to meet minimum standards of maintenance, sanitation, and safety established by the governing board. The minimum standards shall address only conditions that are dangerous and injurious to public health, safety, and welfare and identify circumstances under which a public necessity exists for the repair, closing, or demolition of such buildings or structures. The ordinance shall provide for designation or appointment of a public officer to exercise the powers prescribed by the ordinance, in accordance with the procedures specified in this section. Such ordinance shall be applicable within the local government's planning and development regulation jurisdiction.

(b) Investigation. Whenever it appears to the public officer that any nonresidential building or structure has not been properly maintained so that the safety or health of its occupants or members of the general public are jeopardized for failure of the property to meet the minimum standards established by the governing board, the public officer shall undertake a preliminary investigation. If entry upon the premises for purposes of investigation is necessary, such entry shall be made pursuant to a duly issued administrative search warrant in accordance with G.S. 15-27.2 or with permission of the owner, the owner's agent, a tenant, or other person legally in possession of the premises.

(c) Complaint and Hearing. If the preliminary investigation discloses evidence of a violation of the minimum standards, the public officer shall issue and cause to be served upon the owner of and parties in interest in the nonresidential building or structure a complaint. The complaint shall state the charges and contain a notice that an administrative hearing will be held before the public officer (or his or her designated agent) at a place within the county scheduled not less than 10 days nor more than 30 days after the serving of the complaint; that the owner and parties in interest shall be given the right to answer the complaint and to appear in person, or otherwise, and give testimony at the place and time fixed in the complaint; and that the rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law or equity shall not be controlling in hearings before the public officer.

(d) Order. If, after notice and hearing, the public officer determines that the nonresidential building or structure has not been properly maintained so that the safety or health of its occupants or members of the general public is jeopardized for failure of the property to meet the minimum standards established by the governing board, the public officer shall state in writing findings of fact in support of that determination and shall issue and cause to be served upon the owner thereof an order. The order may require the owner to take remedial action, within a reasonable time specified, subject to the procedures and limitations herein.

(e) Limitations on Orders.

(1) An order may require the owner to repair, alter, or improve the nonresidential building or structure in order to bring it into compliance with the minimum standards established by the governing board or to vacate and close the nonresidential building or structure for any use.

(2) An order may require the owner to remove or demolish the nonresidential building or structure if the cost of repair, alteration, or improvement of the building or structure would exceed fifty percent (50%) of its then current value. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the nonresidential building or structure is designated as a local historic landmark, listed in the

1 National Register of Historic Places, or located in a locally designated  
2 historic district or in a historic district listed in the National Register of  
3 Historic Places and the governing board determines, after a public hearing as  
4 provided by ordinance, that the nonresidential building or structure is of  
5 individual significance or contributes to maintaining the character of the  
6 district, and the nonresidential building or structure has not been condemned  
7 as unsafe, the order may require that the nonresidential building or structure  
8 be vacated and closed until it is brought into compliance with the minimum  
9 standards established by the governing board.

10 (3) An order may not require repairs, alterations, or improvements to be made to  
11 vacant manufacturing facilities or vacant industrial warehouse facilities to  
12 preserve the original use. The order may require such building or structure to  
13 be vacated and closed, but repairs may be required only when necessary to  
14 maintain structural integrity or to abate a health or safety hazard that cannot  
15 be remedied by ordering the building or structure closed for any use.

16 (f) Action by Governing Board Upon Failure to Comply With Order.

17 (1) If the owner fails to comply with an order to repair, alter, or improve or to  
18 vacate and close the nonresidential building or structure, the governing  
19 board may adopt an ordinance ordering the public officer to proceed to  
20 effectuate the purpose of this section with respect to the particular property  
21 or properties that the public officer found to be jeopardizing the health or  
22 safety of its occupants or members of the general public. The property or  
23 properties shall be described in the ordinance. The ordinance shall be  
24 recorded in the office of the register of deeds and shall be indexed in the  
25 name of the property owner or owners in the grantor index. Following  
26 adoption of an ordinance, the public officer may cause the building or  
27 structure to be repaired, altered, or improved or to be vacated and closed.  
28 The public officer may cause to be posted on the main entrance of any  
29 nonresidential building or structure so closed a placard with the following  
30 words: "This building is unfit for any use; the use or occupation of this  
31 building for any purpose is prohibited and unlawful." Any person who  
32 occupies or knowingly allows the occupancy of a building or structure so  
33 posted shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor.

34 (2) If the owner fails to comply with an order to remove or demolish the  
35 nonresidential building or structure, the governing board may adopt an  
36 ordinance ordering the public officer to proceed to effectuate the purpose of  
37 this section with respect to the particular property or properties that the  
38 public officer found to be jeopardizing the health or safety of its occupants  
39 or members of the general public. No ordinance shall be adopted to require  
40 demolition of a nonresidential building or structure until the owner has first  
41 been given a reasonable opportunity to bring it into conformity with the  
42 minimum standards established by the governing board. The property or  
43 properties shall be described in the ordinance. The ordinance shall be  
44 recorded in the office of the register of deeds and shall be indexed in the  
45 name of the property owner or owners in the grantor index. Following  
46 adoption of an ordinance, the public officer may cause the building or  
47 structure to be removed or demolished.

48 (g) Action by Governing Board Upon Abandonment of Intent to Repair. If the  
49 governing board has adopted an ordinance or the public officer has issued an order requiring  
50 the building or structure to be repaired or vacated and closed and the building or structure has  
51 been vacated and closed for a period of two years pursuant to the ordinance or order, the

governing board may make findings that the owner has abandoned the intent and purpose to repair, alter, or improve the building or structure and that the continuation of the building or structure in its vacated and closed status would be inimical to the health, safety, and welfare of the local government in that it would continue to deteriorate, would create a fire or safety hazard, would be a threat to children and vagrants, would attract persons intent on criminal activities, or would cause or contribute to blight and the deterioration of property values in the area. Upon such findings, the governing board may, after the expiration of the two-year period, enact an ordinance and serve such ordinance on the owner, setting forth the following:

(1) If the cost to repair the nonresidential building or structure to bring it into compliance with the minimum standards is less than or equal to fifty percent (50%) of its then current value, the ordinance shall require that the owner either repair or demolish and remove the building or structure within 90 days; or

(2) If the cost to repair the nonresidential building or structure to bring it into compliance with the minimum standards exceeds fifty percent (50%) of its then current value, the ordinance shall require the owner to demolish and remove the building or structure within 90 days.

In the case of vacant manufacturing facilities or vacant industrial warehouse facilities, the building or structure must have been vacated and closed pursuant to an order or ordinance for a period of five years before the governing board may take action under this subsection. The ordinance shall be recorded in the office of the register of deeds in the county wherein the property or properties are located and shall be indexed in the name of the property owner in the grantor index. If the owner fails to comply with the ordinance, the public officer shall effectuate the purpose of the ordinance.

(h) Service of Complaints and Orders. Complaints or orders issued by a public officer pursuant to an ordinance adopted under this section shall be served upon persons either personally or by certified mail so long as the means used are reasonably designed to achieve actual notice. When service is made by certified mail, a copy of the complaint or order may also be sent by regular mail. Service shall be deemed sufficient if the certified mail is refused, but the regular mail is not returned by the post office within 10 days after the mailing. If regular mail is used, a notice of the pending proceedings shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises affected. If the identities of any owners or the whereabouts of persons are unknown and cannot be ascertained by the public officer in the exercise of reasonable diligence, and the public officer makes an affidavit to that effect, the serving of the complaint or order upon the owners or other persons may be made by publication in a newspaper having general circulation in the local government planning and development regulation jurisdiction area at least once no later than the time that personal service would be required under this section. When service is made by publication, a notice of the pending proceedings shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises affected.

(i) Liens.

(1) The amount of the cost of repairs, alterations, or improvements, or vacating and closing, or removal or demolition by the public officer shall be a lien against the real property upon which the cost was incurred, which lien shall be filed, have the same priority, and be collected as the lien for special assessment provided in Article 10 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes.

(2) If the real property upon which the cost was incurred is located in an incorporated city, the amount of the costs is also a lien on any other real property of the owner located within the city limits except for the owner's primary residence. The additional lien provided in this subdivision is inferior to all prior liens and shall be collected as a money judgment.



(3) If the nonresidential building or structure is removed or demolished by the public officer, he or she shall offer for sale the recoverable materials of the building or structure and any personal property, fixtures, or appurtenances found in or attached to the building or structure and shall credit the proceeds of the sale, if any, against the cost of the removal or demolition, and any balance remaining shall be deposited in the superior court by the public officer, shall be secured in a manner directed by the court, and shall be disbursed by the court to the persons found to be entitled thereto by final order or decree of the court. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or limit in any way the power of the governing board to define and declare nuisances and to cause their removal or abatement by summary proceedings or otherwise.

(j) Ejectment. If any occupant fails to comply with an order to vacate a nonresidential building or structure, the public officer may file a civil action in the name of the local government to remove the occupant. The action to vacate shall be in the nature of summary ejectment and shall be commenced by filing a complaint naming as parties-defendant any person occupying the nonresidential building or structure. The clerk of superior court shall issue a summons requiring the defendant to appear before a magistrate at a certain time, date, and place not to exceed 10 days from the issuance of the summons to answer the complaint. The summons and complaint shall be served as provided in G.S. 42-29. The summons shall be returned according to its tenor, and if on its return it appears to have been duly served and if at the hearing the public officer produces a certified copy of an ordinance adopted by the governing board pursuant to subsection (f) of this section to vacate the occupied nonresidential building or structure, the magistrate shall enter judgment ordering that the premises be vacated and all persons be removed. The judgment ordering that the nonresidential building or structure be vacated shall be enforced in the same manner as the judgment for summary ejectment entered under G.S. 42-30. An appeal from any judgment entered under this subsection by the magistrate may be taken as provided in G.S. 7A-228, and the execution of the judgment may be stayed as provided in G.S. 7A-227. An action to remove an occupant of a nonresidential building or structure who is a tenant of the owner may not be in the nature of a summary ejectment proceeding pursuant to this subsection unless the occupant was served with notice, at least 30 days before the filing of the summary ejectment proceeding, that the governing board has ordered the public officer to proceed to exercise his duties under subsection (f) of this section to vacate and close or remove and demolish the nonresidential building or structure.

(k) Civil Penalty. The governing board may impose civil penalties against any person or entity that fails to comply with an order entered pursuant to this section. However, the imposition of civil penalties shall not limit the use of any other lawful remedies available to the governing board for the enforcement of any ordinances adopted pursuant to this section.

(l) Supplemental Powers. The powers conferred by this section are supplemental to the powers conferred by any other law. An ordinance adopted by the governing board may authorize the public officer to exercise any powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purpose and provisions of this section, including the following powers in addition to others herein granted:

(1) To investigate nonresidential buildings and structures in the local government's planning and development regulation jurisdiction to determine whether they have been properly maintained in compliance with the minimum standards so that the safety or health of the occupants or members of the general public are not jeopardized.

(2) To administer oaths, affirmations, examine witnesses, and receive evidence.

(3) To enter upon premises pursuant to subsection (b) of this section for the purpose of making examinations in a manner that will do the least possible inconvenience to the persons in possession.

(4) To appoint and fix the duties of officers, agents, and employees necessary to carry out the purposes of the ordinances adopted by the governing board.

(5) To delegate any of his or her functions and powers under the ordinance to other officers and agents.

(m) Appeals. The governing board may provide that appeals may be taken from any decision or order of the public officer to the local government's housing appeals board or board of adjustment. Any person aggrieved by a decision or order of the public officer shall have the remedies provided in G.S. 160D-12-8.

(n) Funding. The governing board is authorized to make appropriations from its revenues necessary to carry out the purposes of this section and may accept and apply grants or donations to assist in carrying out the provisions of the ordinances adopted by the governing board.

(o) No Effect on Just Compensation for Taking by Eminent Domain. Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the owner or owners of any property from receiving just compensation for the taking of property by the power of eminent domain under the laws of this State, nor as permitting any property to be condemned or destroyed except in accordance with the police power of the State.

(p) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1) "Parties in interest" means all individuals, associations, and corporations who have interests of record in a nonresidential building or structure and any who are in possession thereof.

(2) "Vacant industrial warehouse" means any building or structure designed for the storage of goods or equipment in connection with manufacturing processes, which has not been used for that purpose for at least one year and has not been converted to another use.

(3) "Vacant manufacturing facility" means any building or structure previously used for the lawful production or manufacturing of goods, which has not been used for that purpose for at least one year and has not been converted to another use.

"Article 12.

"Minimum Housing Codes.

#### **"§ 160D-12-1. Authorization.**

(a) Occupied Dwellings. The existence and occupation of dwellings that are unfit for human habitation are inimical to the welfare and dangerous and injurious to the health and safety of the people of this State. A public necessity exists for the repair, closing, or demolition of such dwellings. Whenever any local government finds that there exists in the planning and development regulation jurisdiction dwellings that are unfit for human habitation due to dilapidation, defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents or other calamities, lack of ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities, or due to other conditions rendering the dwellings unsafe or unsanitary, or dangerous or detrimental to the health, safety, morals, or otherwise inimical to the welfare of the residents of the local government, power is conferred upon the local government to exercise its police powers to repair, close, or demolish the dwellings consistent with the provisions of this Article.

(b) Abandoned Structures. Any local government may by ordinance provide for the repair, closing, or demolition of any abandoned structure which the governing board finds to be a health or safety hazard as a result of the attraction of insects or rodents, conditions creating a fire hazard, dangerous conditions constituting a threat to children, or frequent use by vagrants as living quarters in the absence of sanitary facilities. The ordinance may provide for the repair,

1 closing, or demolition of such structure pursuant to the same provisions and procedures as are  
2 prescribed herein for the repair, closing, or demolition of dwellings found to be unfit for human  
3 habitation.

4 **"§ 160A-12-2. Definitions.**

5 The following terms shall have the meanings whenever used or referred to as indicated  
6 when used in this Part unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context:

- 7 (1) "Owner" means the holder of the title in fee simple interest and every  
8 mortgagee of record.  
9 (2) "Parties in interest" means all individuals, associations, and corporations  
10 who have interests of record in a dwelling and any who are in possession  
11 thereof.  
12 (3) "Public authority" means any housing authority or any officer who is in  
13 charge of any department or branch of the government of the city, county, or  
14 State relating to health, fire, building regulations, or other activities  
15 concerning dwellings in the city.  
16 (4) "Public officer" means the officer or officers who are authorized by  
17 ordinances adopted hereunder to exercise the powers prescribed by the  
18 ordinances and by this Article.

19 **"§ 160D-12-3. Ordinance authorized as to repair, closing, and demolition; order of public**  
20 **officer.**

21 Upon the adoption of an ordinance finding that dwelling conditions of the character  
22 described in G.S. 160D-12-1 exist, the governing board is authorized to adopt and enforce  
23 ordinances relating to dwellings within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction  
24 that are unfit for human habitation. These ordinances shall include the following provisions:

- 25 (1) Designation of enforcement officer. One or more public officers shall be  
26 designated to exercise the powers prescribed by the ordinance.  
27 (2) Investigation, complaint, hearing. Whenever a petition is filed with the  
28 public officer by a public authority or by at least five residents of the local  
29 government charging that any dwelling is unfit for human habitation or  
30 when it appears to the public officer that any dwelling is unfit for human  
31 habitation, the public officer shall, if a preliminary investigation discloses a  
32 basis for such charges, issue and cause to be served upon the owner of and  
33 parties in interest in such dwellings a complaint stating the charges in that  
34 respect and containing a notice that an administrative hearing will be held  
35 before the public officer (or the officer's designated agent) at a place within  
36 the county in which the property is located. The hearing shall be not less  
37 than 10 days nor more than 30 days after the serving of the complaint. The  
38 owner and parties in interest shall be given the right to file an answer to the  
39 complaint and to appear in person, or otherwise, and give testimony at the  
40 place and time fixed in the complaint. The rules of evidence prevailing in  
41 courts of law shall not be controlling in administrative hearings before the  
42 public officer.  
43 (3) Orders. If, after notice and hearing, the public officer determines that the  
44 dwelling under consideration is unfit for human habitation, the officer shall  
45 state in writing findings of fact in support of that determination and shall  
46 issue and cause to be served upon the owner one of the two following orders,  
47 whichever is appropriate:  
48 a. If the repair, alteration, or improvement of the dwelling can be made  
49 at a reasonable cost in relation to the value of the dwelling, requiring  
50 the owner, within the time specified, to repair, alter, or improve the  
51 dwelling in order to render it fit for human habitation. The ordinance

may fix a certain percentage of this value as being reasonable. The order may require that the property be vacated and closed only if continued occupancy during the time allowed for repair will present a significant threat of bodily harm, taking into account the nature of the necessary repairs, alterations, or improvements; the current state of the property; and any additional risks due to the presence and capacity of minors under the age of 18 or occupants with physical or mental disabilities. The order shall state that the failure to make timely repairs as directed in the order shall make the dwelling subject to the issuance of an unfit order under subdivision (4) of this section; or

b. If the repair, alteration, or improvement of the dwelling cannot be made at a reasonable cost in relation to the value of the dwelling, requiring the owner, within the time specified in the order, to remove or demolish such dwelling. The ordinance may fix a certain percentage of this value as being reasonable. However, notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the dwelling is located in a historic district and the Historic District Commission determines, after a public hearing as provided by ordinance, that the dwelling is of particular significance or value toward maintaining the character of the district, and the dwelling has not been condemned as unsafe, the order may require that the dwelling be vacated and closed consistent with G.S. 160D-9-49.

(4) Repair, closing, and posting. If the owner fails to comply with an order to repair, alter, or improve or to vacate and close the dwelling, the public officer may cause the dwelling to be repaired, altered, or improved or to be vacated and closed; the public officer may cause to be posted on the main entrance of any dwelling so closed, a placard with the following words: "This building is unfit for human habitation; the use or occupation of this building for human habitation is prohibited and unlawful." Occupation of a building so posted shall constitute a Class 1 misdemeanor. The duties of the public officer set forth in this subdivision shall not be exercised until the governing board shall have by ordinance ordered the public officer to proceed to effectuate the purpose of this Article with respect to the particular property or properties which the public officer shall have found to be unfit for human habitation and which property or properties shall be described in the ordinance. This ordinance shall be recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds in the county wherein the property or properties are located and shall be indexed in the name of the property owner in the grantor index.

(5) Demolition. If the owner fails to comply with an order to remove or demolish the dwelling, the public officer may cause such dwelling to be removed or demolished. The duties of the public officer set forth in this subdivision shall not be exercised until the governing board shall have by ordinance ordered the public officer to proceed to effectuate the purpose of this Article with respect to the particular property or properties which the public officer shall have found to be unfit for human habitation and which property or properties shall be described in the ordinance. No such ordinance shall be adopted to require demolition of a dwelling until the owner has first been given a reasonable opportunity to bring it into conformity with the housing code. This ordinance shall be recorded in the office of the Register

1 of Deeds in the county wherein the property or properties are located and  
2 shall be indexed in the name of the property owner in the grantor index.  
3 (5a) Abandonment of intent to repair. If the governing board shall have adopted  
4 an ordinance as provided in subdivision (4) of this section, or the public  
5 officer shall have:

6 (1) Issued an order or commenced proceedings under the substandard  
7 housing regulations regarding a dwelling to be repaired or vacated and  
8 closed, as provided in sub-division a. of subdivision (3) of this section; and

9 (2) If the dwelling has been vacated and closed for a period of one  
10 year pursuant to the ordinance or after such proceedings have commenced,  
11 then if the governing board shall find that the owner has abandoned the  
12 intent and purpose to repair, alter, or improve the dwelling in order to render  
13 it fit for human habitation and that the continuation of the dwelling in its  
14 vacated and closed status would be inimical to the health, safety, and welfare  
15 of the local government in that the dwelling would continue to deteriorate,  
16 would create a fire and safety hazard, would be a threat to children and  
17 vagrants, would attract persons intent on criminal activities, would cause or  
18 contribute to blight and the deterioration of property values in the area, and  
19 would render unavailable property and a dwelling which might otherwise  
20 have been made available to ease the persistent shortage of decent and  
21 affordable housing in this State, then in such circumstances, the governing  
22 board may, after the expiration of such one year period, enact an ordinance  
23 and serve such ordinance on the owner, setting forth the following:

24 a. If it is determined that the repair of the dwelling to render it fit for  
25 human habitation can be made at a cost not exceeding fifty percent  
26 (50%) of the then current value of the dwelling, the ordinance shall  
27 require that the owner either repair or demolish and remove the  
28 dwelling within 90 days; or

29 b. If it is determined that the repair of the dwelling to render it fit for  
30 human habitation cannot be made at a cost not exceeding fifty  
31 percent (50%) of the then current value of the dwelling, the  
32 ordinance shall require the owner to demolish and remove the  
33 dwelling within 90 days.

34 This ordinance shall be recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds in the  
35 county wherein the property or properties are located and shall be indexed in  
36 the name of the property owner in the grantor index. If the owner fails to  
37 comply with this ordinance, the public officer shall effectuate the purpose of  
38 the ordinance.

39 (6) Liens.

40 a. That the amount of the cost of repairs, alterations, or improvements,  
41 or vacating and closing, or removal or demolition by the public  
42 officer shall be a lien against the real property upon which the cost  
43 was incurred, which lien shall be filed, have the same priority, and be  
44 collected as the lien for special assessment provided in Article 10 of  
45 Chapter 160A of the General Statutes.

46 b. If the real property upon which the cost was incurred is located in an  
47 incorporated city, then the amount of the cost is also a lien on any  
48 other real property of the owner located within the city limits or  
49 within one mile thereof except for the owner's primary residence.  
50 The additional lien provided in this sub-subdivision is inferior to all  
51 prior liens and shall be collected as a money judgment.



c. If the dwelling is removed or demolished by the public officer, the local government shall sell the materials of the dwelling, and any personal property, fixtures, or appurtenances found in or attached to the dwelling, and shall credit the proceeds of the sale against the cost of the removal or demolition, and any balance remaining shall be deposited in the superior court by the public officer, shall be secured in a manner directed by the court, and shall be disbursed by the court to the persons found to be entitled thereto by final order or decree of the court. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or limit in any way the power of the local government to define and declare nuisances and to cause their removal or abatement by summary proceedings, or otherwise.

(7) Civil action. If any occupant fails to comply with an order to vacate a dwelling, the public officer may file a civil action in the name of the local government to remove such occupant. The action to vacate the dwelling shall be in the nature of summary ejectment and shall be commenced by filing a complaint naming as defendant any person occupying such dwelling. The clerk of superior court shall issue a summons requiring the defendant to appear before a magistrate at a certain time, date, and place not to exceed 10 days from the issuance of the summons to answer the complaint. The summons and complaint shall be served as provided in G.S. 42-29. If the summons appears to have been duly served, and if at the hearing the public officer produces a certified copy of an ordinance adopted by the governing board pursuant to subdivision (5) of this section authorizing the officer to proceed to vacate the occupied dwelling, the magistrate shall enter judgment ordering that the premises be vacated and that all persons be removed. The judgment ordering that the dwelling be vacated shall be enforced in the same manner as the judgment for summary ejectment entered under G.S. 42-30. An appeal from any judgment entered hereunder by the magistrate may be taken as provided in G.S. 7A-228, and the execution of such judgment may be stayed as provided in G.S. 7A-227. An action to remove an occupant of a dwelling who is a tenant of the owner may not be in the nature of a summary ejectment proceeding pursuant to this paragraph unless such occupant was served with notice at least 30 days before the filing of the summary ejectment proceeding that the governing board has ordered the public officer to proceed to exercise his duties under subdivisions (4) and (5) of this section to vacate and close or remove and demolish the dwelling.

(8) Additional notices to affordable housing organizations. Whenever a determination is made pursuant to subdivision (3) of this section that a dwelling must be vacated and closed or removed or demolished, under the provisions of this section, notice of the order shall be given by first-class mail to any organization involved in providing or restoring dwellings for affordable housing that has filed a written request for such notices. A minimum period of 45 days from the mailing of such notice shall be given before removal or demolition by action of the public officer to allow the opportunity for any organization to negotiate with the owner to make repairs, lease, or purchase the property for the purpose of providing affordable housing. The public officer or clerk shall certify the mailing of the notices, and the certification shall be conclusive in the absence of fraud. Only an organization that has filed a written request for such notices may raise the issue of failure to mail such notices, and the sole remedy shall be an order

1 requiring the public officer to wait 45 days before causing removal or  
2 demolition.

3 **"§ 160D-12-4. Heat source required.**

4 (a) A local government shall, by ordinance, require that every dwelling unit leased as  
5 rental property within the city shall have, at a minimum, a central or electric heating system or  
6 sufficient chimneys, flues, or gas vents, with heating appliances connected, so as to heat at least  
7 one habitable room, excluding the kitchen, to a minimum temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit  
8 measured three feet above the floor with an outside temperature of 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

9 (b) If a dwelling unit contains a heating system or heating appliances that meet the  
10 requirements of subsection (a) of this section, the owner of the dwelling unit shall not be  
11 required to install a new heating system or heating appliances, but the owner shall be required  
12 to maintain the existing heating system or heating appliances in a good and safe working  
13 condition. Otherwise, the owner of the dwelling unit shall install a heating system or heating  
14 appliances that meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this section and shall maintain the  
15 heating system or heating appliances in a good and safe working condition.

16 (c) Portable kerosene heaters are not acceptable as a permanent source of heat as  
17 required by subsection (a) of this section but may be used as a supplementary source in  
18 single-family dwellings and duplex units. An owner who has complied with subsection (a) of  
19 this section shall not be held in violation of this section where an occupant of a dwelling unit  
20 uses a kerosene heater as a primary source of heat.

21 (d) This section applies only to local governments with a population of 200,000 or over  
22 within their planning and development regulation jurisdiction, according to the most recent  
23 decennial federal census.

24 (e) Nothing in this section shall be construed as:

25 (1) Diminishing the rights of or remedies available to any tenant under a lease  
26 agreement, statute, or at common law; or

27 (2) Prohibiting a city from adopting an ordinance with more stringent heating  
28 requirements than provided for by this section.

29 **"§ 160D-12-5. Standards.**

30 An ordinance adopted under this Article shall provide that the public officer may determine  
31 that a dwelling is unfit for human habitation if the officer finds that conditions exist in the  
32 dwelling that render it dangerous or injurious to the health or safety of the occupants of the  
33 dwelling, the occupants of neighboring dwellings, or other residents of the jurisdiction.  
34 Defective conditions may include the following (without limiting the generality of the  
35 foregoing): defects therein increasing the hazards of fire, accident, or other calamities; lack of  
36 adequate ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities; dilapidation; disrepair; structural defects;  
37 uncleanliness. The ordinances may provide additional standards to guide the public officers in  
38 determining the fitness of a dwelling for human habitation.

39 **"§ 160D-12-6. Service of complaints and orders.**

40 (a) Complaints or orders issued by a public officer pursuant to an ordinance adopted  
41 under this Article shall be served upon persons either personally or by certified mail. When  
42 service is made by certified mail, a copy of the complaint or order may also be sent by regular  
43 mail. Service shall be deemed sufficient if the certified mail is unclaimed or refused, but the  
44 regular mail is not returned by the post office within 10 days after the mailing. If regular mail is  
45 used, a notice of the pending proceedings shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the  
46 premises affected.

47 (a1) If the identities of any owners or the whereabouts of persons are unknown and  
48 cannot be ascertained by the public officer in the exercise of reasonable diligence, or, if the  
49 owners are known but have refused to accept service by certified mail, and the public officer  
50 makes an affidavit to that effect, then the serving of the complaint or order upon the owners or  
51 other persons may be made by publication in a newspaper having general circulation in the

jurisdiction at least once no later than the time at which personal service would be required under the provisions of this Article. When service is made by publication, a notice of the pending proceedings shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises thereby affected.

**"§ 160D-12-7. Periodic inspections.**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the inspection department may make periodic inspections only when there is reasonable cause to believe that unsafe, unsanitary, or otherwise hazardous or unlawful conditions may exist in a residential building or structure. For purposes of this section, the term "reasonable cause" means any of the following: (i) the landlord or owner has a history of more than two verified violations of the housing ordinances or codes within a 12-month period; (ii) there has been a complaint that substandard conditions exist within the building or there has been a request that the building be inspected; (iii) the inspection department has actual knowledge of an unsafe condition within the building; or (iv) violations of the local ordinances or codes are visible from the outside of the property. In conducting inspections authorized under this section, the inspection department shall not discriminate between single-family and multifamily buildings. In exercising this power, members of the department shall have a right to enter on any premises within the jurisdiction of the department at all reasonable hours for the purposes of inspection or other enforcement action, upon presentation of proper credentials. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit periodic inspections in accordance with State fire prevention code or as otherwise required by State law.

(b) A local government may require periodic inspections as part of a targeted effort within a geographic area that has been designated by the governing board. The local government shall not discriminate in its selection of areas or housing types to be targeted and shall (i) provide notice to all owners and residents of properties in the affected area about the periodic inspections plan and information regarding a public hearing regarding the plan; (ii) hold a public hearing regarding the plan; and (iii) establish a plan to address the ability of low-income residential property owners to comply with minimum housing code standards.

(c) In no event may a local government do any of the following: (i) adopt or enforce any ordinance that would require any owner or manager of rental property to obtain any permit or permission under Article 11 or Article 12 of this Chapter from the local government to lease or rent residential real property, except for those properties that have more than three verified violations in a 12-month period or upon the property being identified within the top 10% of properties with crime or disorder problems as set forth in a local ordinance; (ii) require that an owner or manager of residential rental property enroll or participate in any governmental program as a condition of obtaining a certificate of occupancy; or (iii) except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, levy a special fee or tax on residential rental property that is not also levied against other commercial and residential properties.

(d) A local government may levy a fee for residential rental property registration under subsection (c) of this section for those rental units which have been found with more than two verified violations of local ordinances within the previous 12 months or upon the property being identified within the top ten percent (10%) of properties with crime or disorder problems as set forth in a local ordinance. The fee shall be an amount that covers the cost of operating a residential registration program and shall not be used to supplant revenue in other areas. Local governments using registration programs that charge registration fees for all residential rental properties as of June 1, 2011, may continue levying a fee on all residential rental properties as follows:

- (1) For properties with 20 or more residential rental units, the fee shall be no more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) per year.
- (2) For properties with fewer than 20 but more than three residential rental units, the fee shall be no more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per year.

(3) For properties with three or fewer residential rental units, the fee shall be no more than fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per year.

**"§ 160D-12-8. Remedies.**

(a) An ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article may provide for a housing appeals board as provided by G.S. 160D-3-6. An appeal from any decision or order of the public officer may be taken by any person aggrieved thereby or by any officer, board, or commission of the local government. Any appeal from the public officer shall be taken within 10 days from the rendering of the decision or service of the order by filing with the public officer and with the housing appeals board a notice of appeal which shall specify the grounds upon which the appeal is based. Upon the filing of any notice of appeal, the public officer shall forthwith transmit to the board all the papers constituting the record upon which the decision appealed from was made. When an appeal is from a decision of the public officer refusing to allow the person aggrieved thereby to do any act, the decision shall remain in force until modified or reversed. When any appeal is from a decision of the public officer requiring the person aggrieved to do any act, the appeal shall have the effect of suspending the requirement until the hearing by the board, unless the public officer certifies to the board, after the notice of appeal is filed with the officer, that because of facts stated in the certificate (a copy of which shall be furnished the appellant), a suspension of the requirement would cause imminent peril to life or property. In that case the requirement shall not be suspended except by a restraining order, which may be granted for due cause shown upon not less than one day's written notice to the public officer, by the board, or by a court of record upon petition made pursuant to subsection (f) of this section.

(b) The housing appeals board shall fix a reasonable time for hearing appeals, shall give due notice to the parties, and shall render its decision within a reasonable time. Any party may appear in person or by agent or attorney. The board may reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify the decision or order appealed from, and may make any decision and order that in its opinion ought to be made in the matter, and to that end it shall have all the powers of the public officer, but the concurring vote of four members of the board shall be necessary to reverse or modify any decision or order of the public officer. The board shall have power also in passing upon appeals, when unnecessary hardships would result from carrying out the strict letter of the ordinance, to adapt the application of the ordinance to the necessities of the case to the end that the spirit of the ordinance shall be observed, public safety and welfare secured, and substantial justice done.

(c) Every decision of the housing appeals board shall be subject to review by proceedings in the nature of certiorari instituted within 15 days of the decision of the board, but not otherwise.

(d) Any person aggrieved by an order issued by the public officer or a decision rendered by the housing appeals board may petition the superior court for an injunction restraining the public officer from carrying out the order or decision, and the court may, upon such petition, issue a temporary injunction restraining the public officer pending a final disposition of the cause. The petition shall be filed within 30 days after issuance of the order or rendering of the decision. Hearings shall be had by the court on a petition within 20 days and shall be given preference over other matters on the court's calendar. The court shall hear and determine the issues raised and shall enter such final order or decree as law and justice may require. It shall not be necessary to file bond in any amount before obtaining a temporary injunction under this subsection.

(e) If any dwelling is erected, constructed, altered, repaired, converted, maintained, or used in violation of this Article or of any ordinance or code adopted under authority of this Article or any valid order or decision of the public officer or board made pursuant to any ordinance or code adopted under authority of this Article, the public officer or board may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent the unlawful erection, construction,

reconstruction, alteration, or use, to restrain, correct, or abate the violation, to prevent the occupancy of the dwelling, or to prevent any illegal act, conduct, or use in or about the premises of the dwelling.

**"§ 160D-12-9. Compensation to owners of condemned property.**

Nothing in this Article shall be construed as preventing the owner or owners of any property from receiving just compensation for the taking of property by the power of eminent domain under the laws of this State, nor as permitting any property to be condemned or destroyed except in accordance with the police power of the State.

**"§ 160D-12-10. Additional powers of public officer.**

An ordinance adopted by the governing board may authorize the public officer to exercise any powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purpose and provisions of this Article, including the following powers in addition to others herein granted:

- (1) To investigate the dwelling conditions in the local government's planning and development regulation jurisdiction in order to determine which dwellings therein are unfit for human habitations;
- (2) To administer oaths, affirmations, examine witnesses, and receive evidence;
- (3) To enter upon premises for the purpose of making examinations in a manner that will do the least possible inconvenience to the persons in possession;
- (4) To appoint and fix the duties of officers, agents, and employees necessary to carry out the purposes of the ordinances; and
- (5) To delegate any of his functions and powers under the ordinance to other officers and other agents.

**"§ 160D-12-11. Administration of ordinance.**

A local government adopting an ordinance under this Article shall, as soon as possible thereafter, prepare an estimate of the annual expenses or costs to provide the equipment, personnel, and supplies necessary for periodic examinations and investigations of the dwellings for the purpose of determining the fitness of dwellings for human habitation, and for the enforcement and administration of its ordinances adopted under this Article. The local government is authorized to make appropriations from its revenues necessary for this purpose and may accept and apply grants or donations to assist it in carrying out the provisions of the ordinances.

**"§ 160D-12-12. Supplemental nature of Article.**

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to abrogate or impair the powers of the courts or of any department of any local government to enforce any provisions of its charter or its ordinances or regulations, nor to prevent or punish violations thereof. The powers conferred by this Article shall be supplemental to the powers conferred by any other law.

"Article 13.

"Additional Authority.

"Part 1. Open Space Acquisition.

**"§ 160D-13-1. Legislative intent.**

It is the intent of the General Assembly to provide a means whereby any local government may acquire, by purchase, gift, grant, devise, lease, or otherwise, and through the expenditure of public funds, the fee or any lesser interest or right in real property in order to preserve, through limitation of their future use, open spaces and areas for public use and enjoyment.

**"§ 160D-13-2. Finding of necessity.**

The General Assembly finds that the rapid growth and spread of urban development in the State is encroaching upon, or eliminating, many open areas and spaces of varied size and character, including many having significant scenic or aesthetic values, which areas and spaces if preserved and maintained in their present open state would constitute important physical, social, esthetic, or economic assets to existing and impending urban development. The General Assembly declares that it is necessary for sound and proper urban development and in the



public interest of the people of this State for any local government to expend or advance public funds for, or to accept by purchase, gift, grant, devise, lease, or otherwise, the fee or any lesser interest or right in real property so as to acquire, maintain, improve, protect, limit the future use of, or otherwise conserve open spaces and areas within their respective jurisdictions as defined by this Article.

The General Assembly declares that the acquisition of interests or rights in real property for the preservation of open spaces and areas constitutes a public purpose for which public funds may be expended or advanced.

**"§ 160D-13-3. Local governments authorized to acquire and reconvey real property.**

Any local government may acquire by purchase, gift, grant, devise, lease, or otherwise, the fee or any lesser interest, development right, easement, covenant, or other contractual right of or to real property within its respective jurisdiction, when it finds that the acquisition is necessary to achieve the purposes of this Part. Any local government may also acquire the fee to any property for the purpose of conveying or leasing the property back to its original owner or other person under covenants or other contractual arrangements that will limit the future use of the property in accordance with the purposes of this Part, but when this is done, the property may be conveyed back to its original owner but to no other person by private sale.

**"§ 160D-13-4. Joint action by governing bodies.**

A local government may enter into any agreement with any other local government for the purpose of jointly exercising the authority granted by this Part.

**"§ 160D-13-5. Power of governing bodies.**

A local government, in order to exercise the authority granted by this Part, may:

- (1) Enter into and carry out contracts with the State or federal government or any agencies thereof under which grants or other assistance are made to the local government;
- (2) Accept any assistance or funds that may be granted by the State or federal government with or without a contract;
- (3) Agree to and comply with any reasonable conditions imposed upon grants;
- (4) Make expenditures from any funds so granted.

**"§ 160D-13-6. Appropriations authorized.**

For the purposes set forth in this Part, a local government may appropriate funds not otherwise limited as to use by law.

**"§ 160D-13-7. Definitions.**

(a) For the purpose of this Part an "open space" or "open area" is any space or area (i) characterized by great natural scenic beauty or (ii) whose existing openness, natural condition, or present state of use, if retained, would enhance the present or potential value of abutting or surrounding urban development, or would maintain or enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources.

(b) For the purposes of this Part "open space" or "open area" and the "public use and enjoyment" of interests or rights in real property shall also include open space land and open space uses. The term "open space land" means any undeveloped or predominantly undeveloped land in an urban area that has value for one or more of the following purposes: (i) park and recreational purposes, (ii) conservation of land and other natural resources, or (iii) historic or scenic purposes. The term "open space uses" means any use of open space land for (i) park and recreational purposes, (ii) conservation of land and other natural resources, or (iii) historic or scenic purposes.

**"Part 2. Community Development and Redevelopment.**

**"§ 160D-13-11. Community development programs and activities.**

(a) A local government is authorized to engage in, to accept federal and State grants and loans for, and to appropriate and expend funds for community development programs and

activities. In undertaking community development programs and activities, in addition to other authority granted by law, a city may engage in the following activities:

(1) Programs of assistance and financing of rehabilitation of private buildings principally for the benefit of low and moderate income persons, or for the restoration or preservation of older neighborhoods or properties, including direct repair, the making of grants or loans, the subsidization of interest payments on loans, and the guaranty of loans;

(2) Programs concerned with employment, economic development, crime prevention, child care, health, drug abuse, education, and welfare needs of persons of low and moderate income.

(b) A governing board may exercise directly those powers granted by law to local government redevelopment commissions and those powers granted by law to local government housing authorities, and may do so whether or not a redevelopment commission or housing authority is in existence in such local government. Any governing board desiring to do so may delegate to any redevelopment commission or to any housing authority the responsibility of undertaking or carrying out any specified community development activities. Any governing board may by agreement undertake or carry out for each other any specified community development activities. A governing board may contract with any person, association, or corporation in undertaking any specified community development activities. Any county or city board of health, county board of social services, or county or city board of education may by agreement undertake or carry out for any governing board any specified community development activities.

(c) A local government undertaking community development programs or activities may create one or more advisory committees to advise it and to make recommendations concerning such programs or activities.

(d) A governing board proposing to undertake any loan guaranty or similar program for rehabilitation of private buildings is authorized to submit to its voters the question whether such program shall be undertaken, such referendum to be conducted pursuant to the general and local laws applicable to special elections in such local government. No State or local taxes shall be appropriated or expended by a county pursuant to this section for any purpose not expressly authorized by G.S. 153A-149, unless the same is first submitted to a vote of the people as therein provided.

(e) A local government may receive and dispense funds from the Community Development Block Grant Section 108 Loan Guarantee program, Subpart M, 24 C.F.R. § 570.700 et seq., either through application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce or directly from the federal government, in accordance with State and federal laws governing these funds. Any local government that receives these funds directly from the federal government may pledge current and future CDBG funds for use as loan guarantees in accordance with State and federal laws governing these funds. A local government may implement the receipt, dispensing, and pledging of CDBG funds under this subsection by borrowing CDBG funds and lending all or a portion of those funds to a third party in accordance with applicable laws governing the CDBG program.

A local government that has pledged current or future CDBG funds for use as loan guarantees prior to the enactment of this subsection is authorized to have taken such action. A pledge of future CDBG funds under this subsection is not a debt or liability of the State or any political subdivision of the State or a pledge of the faith and credit of the State or any political subdivision of the State. The pledging of future CDBG funds under this subsection does not directly, indirectly, or contingently obligate the State or any political subdivision of the State to levy or to pledge any taxes.

(f) All program income from Economic Development Grants from the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program may be retained by recipient cities and

counties in "economically distressed counties", as defined in G.S. 143B-437.01, for the purposes of creating local economic development revolving loan funds. Such program income derived through the use by cities of Small Cities Community Development Block Grant money includes, but is not limited to: (i) payment of principal and interest on loans made by the county using Community Development Block Grant Funds; (ii) proceeds from the lease or disposition of real property acquired with Community Development Block Grant Funds; and (iii) any late fees associated with loan or lease payments in (i) and (ii) of this subsection. The local economic development revolving loan fund set up by the city shall fund only those activities eligible under Title I of the federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-383), and shall meet at least one of the three national objectives of the Housing and Community Development Act. Any expiration of G.S. 143B-437.01 or G.S. 105-129.3 shall not affect this subsection as to designations of economically distressed counties made prior to its expiration.

**"§ 160D-13-12. Acquisition and disposition of property for redevelopment.**

Any local government is authorized, either as a part of a community development program or independently thereof, and without the necessity of compliance with the Urban Redevelopment Law, to exercise the following powers:

- (1) To acquire, by voluntary purchase from the owner or owners, real property which is either:
  - a. Blighted, deteriorated, deteriorating, undeveloped, or inappropriately developed from the standpoint of sound community development and growth;
  - b. Appropriate for rehabilitation or conservation activities;
  - c. Appropriate for housing construction or the economic development of the community; or
  - d. Appropriate for the preservation or restoration of historic sites, the beautification of urban land, the conservation of open space, natural resources, and scenic areas, the provision of recreational opportunities, or the guidance of urban development;
- (2) To clear, demolish, remove, or rehabilitate buildings and improvements on land so acquired;
- (3) To retain property so acquired for public purposes, or to dispose, through sale, lease, or otherwise, of any property so acquired to any person, firm, corporation, or governmental unit; provided, the disposition of such property shall be undertaken in accordance with the procedures of Article 12 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, or the procedures of G.S. 160A-514, or any applicable local act or charter provision modifying such procedures; or subsection (4) of this section;
- (4) To sell, exchange, or otherwise transfer real property or any interest therein in a community development project area to any redeveloper at private sale for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, or other uses or for public use in accordance with the community development plan, subject to such covenants, conditions, and restrictions as may be deemed to be in the public interest or to carry out the purposes of this Article; provided, that such sale, exchange, or other transfer, and any agreement relating thereto, may be made only after approval of the governing board and after a public hearing; a notice of the public hearing shall be given once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper having general circulation in the local government planning and development regulation jurisdiction area, and the notice shall be published the first time not less than 10 days nor more than 25 days preceding the public hearing; and the notice shall disclose the terms of the

1 sale, exchange, or transfer. At the public hearing the appraised value of the  
2 property to be sold, exchanged, or transferred shall be disclosed; and the  
3 consideration for the conveyance shall not be less than the appraised value.

4 **"§ 160D-13-13. Urban Development Action Grants.**

5 Any local government is authorized, either as a part of a community development program  
6 or independently thereof, to enter into contracts or agreements with any person, association, or  
7 corporation to undertake and carry out specified activities in furtherance of the purposes of  
8 Urban Development Action Grants authorized by the Housing and Community Development  
9 Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-128) or any amendment thereto which is a continuation of such grant  
10 programs by whatever designation, including the authority to enter into and carry out contracts  
11 or agreements to extend loans, loan subsidies, or grants to persons, associations, or corporations  
12 and to dispose of real or personal property by private sale in furtherance of such contracts or  
13 agreements.

14 Any enabling legislation contained in local acts which refers to "Urban Development  
15 Action Grants" or the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-128) shall  
16 be construed also to refer to any continuation of such grant programs by whatever designation.

17 **"§ 160D-13-14. Urban homesteading programs.**

18 A local government may establish a program of urban homesteading, in which residential  
19 property of little or no value is conveyed to persons who agree to rehabilitate the property and  
20 use it, for a minimum number of years, as their principal place of residence. Residential  
21 property is considered of little or no value if the cost of bringing the property into compliance  
22 with the local government's housing code exceeds sixty percent (60%) of the property's  
23 appraised value on the county tax records. In undertaking such a program a local government  
24 may:

- 25 (1) Acquire by purchase, gift, or otherwise, but not eminent domain, residential  
26 property specifically for the purpose of reconveyance in the urban  
27 homesteading program or may transfer to the program residential property  
28 acquired for other purposes, including property purchased at a tax  
29 foreclosure sale.
- 30 (2) Under procedures and standards established by the local government, convey  
31 residential property by private sale under G.S. 160A-267 and for nominal  
32 monetary consideration to persons who qualify as grantees.
- 33 (3) Convey property subject to conditions that:
- 34 a. Require the grantee to use the property as his or her principal place  
35 of residence for a minimum number of years;
- 36 b. Require the grantee to rehabilitate the property so that it meets or  
37 exceeds minimum housing code standards;
- 38 c. Require the grantee to maintain insurance on the property;
- 39 d. Set out any other specific conditions (including, but not limited to,  
40 design standards) or actions that the local government may require;  
41 and
- 42 e. Provide for the termination of the grantee's interest in the property  
43 and its reversion to the local government upon the grantee's failure to  
44 meet any condition so established.
- 45 (4) Subordinate the local government's interest in the property to any security  
46 interest granted by the grantee to a lender of funds to purchase or rehabilitate  
47 the property.

48 **"§ 160D-13-15. Downtown development projects.**

49 (a) Definition. In this section, "downtown development project" means a capital project  
50 in a central business district, as that district is defined by the governing board, comprising one  
51 or more buildings and including both public and private facilities. By way of illustration but not

1 limitation, such a project might include a single building comprising a publicly owned parking  
2 structure and publicly owned convention center and a privately owned hotel or office building.

3 (b) Authorization. If the governing board finds that it is likely to have a significant  
4 effect on the revitalization of the jurisdiction, the local government may acquire, construct,  
5 own, and operate or participate in the acquisition, construction, ownership, and operation of a  
6 joint development project or of specific facilities within such a project. The local government  
7 may enter into binding contracts with one or more private developers with respect to acquiring,  
8 constructing, owning, or operating such a project. Such a contract may, among other  
9 provisions, specify the following:

10 (1) The property interests of both the local government and the developer or  
11 developers in the project, provided that the property interests of the local  
12 government shall be limited to facilities for a public purpose;

13 (2) The responsibilities of the local government and the developer or developers  
14 for construction of the project; and

15 (3) The responsibilities of the local government and the developer or developers  
16 with respect to financing the project.

17 Such a contract may be entered into before the acquisition of any real property necessary to  
18 the project.

19 (c) Eligible Property. A joint development project may be constructed on property  
20 acquired by the developer or developers, on property directly acquired by the local government,  
21 or on property acquired by the local government while exercising the powers, duties, and  
22 responsibilities of a redevelopment commission pursuant to G.S. 160A-505 or  
23 G.S. 160D-13-11.

24 (d) Conveyance of Property Rights. In connection with a joint development project, the  
25 local government may convey interests in property owned by it, including air rights over public  
26 facilities, as follows:

27 (1) If the property was acquired while the local government was exercising the  
28 powers, duties, and responsibilities of a redevelopment commission, the  
29 local government may convey property interests pursuant to the "Urban  
30 Redevelopment Law" or any local modification thereof.

31 (2) If the property was acquired by the local government directly, the local  
32 government may convey property interests pursuant to G.S. 160D-13-12,  
33 and Article 12 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes does not apply to  
34 such dispositions.

35 (3) In lieu of conveying the fee interest in air rights, the local government may  
36 convey a leasehold interest for a period not to exceed 99 years, using the  
37 procedures of subdivisions (1) or (2) of this subsection, as applicable.

38 (e) Construction. The contract between the local government and the developer or  
39 developers may provide that the developer or developers shall be responsible for construction  
40 of the entire joint development project. If so, the contract shall include such provisions as the  
41 governing board deems sufficient to assure that the public facility or facilities included in the  
42 project meet the needs of the local government and are constructed at a reasonable price. A  
43 project constructed pursuant to this paragraph is not subject to Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the  
44 General Statutes, provided that local government funds constitute no more than fifty percent  
45 (50%) of the total costs of the joint development project. Federal funds available for loan to  
46 private developers in connection with a joint development project shall not be considered local  
47 government funds for purposes of this subsection.

48 (f) Operation. The local government may contract for the operation of any public  
49 facility or facilities included in a joint redevelopment project by a person, partnership, firm, or  
50 corporation, public or private. Such a contract shall include provisions sufficient to assure that  
51 any such facility or facilities are operated for the benefit of the citizens of the local government.



(g) Grant Funds. To assist in the financing of its share of a joint development project, the local government may apply for, accept, and expend grant funds from the federal or State governments.

**"§ 160D-13-16. Low- and moderate-income housing programs.**

Any local government is authorized to exercise the following powers:

- (1) To engage in and to appropriate and expend funds for residential housing construction, new or rehabilitated, for sale or rental to persons and families of low and moderate income. Any governing board may contract with any person, association, or corporation to implement the provisions of this subdivision.
- (2) To acquire real property by voluntary purchase from the owners to be developed by the local government or to be used by the local government to provide affordable housing to persons of low and moderate income.
- (3) To convey property by private sale to any public or private entity that provides affordable housing to persons of low or moderate income under procedures and standards established by the local government. The local government shall include as part of any such conveyance covenants or conditions that assure the property will be developed by the entity for sale or lease to persons of low or moderate income.
- (4) To convey residential property by private sale to persons of low or moderate income, in accordance with procedures and standards established by the local government, with G.S. 160A-267, and with any terms and conditions that the governing board may determine.

"Part 3. Miscellaneous.

**"§ 160D-13-20. Program to finance energy improvements.**

(a) Purpose. The General Assembly finds it is in the best interest of the citizens of North Carolina to promote and encourage renewable energy and energy efficiency within the State in order to conserve energy, promote economic competitiveness, and expand employment in the State. The General Assembly also finds that a local government has an integral role in furthering this purpose by promoting and encouraging renewable energy and energy efficiency within the local government's territorial jurisdiction. In furtherance of this purpose, a local government may establish a program to finance the purchase and installation of distributed generation renewable energy sources or energy efficiency improvements that are permanently affixed to residential, commercial, or other real property.

(b) Financing Assistance. A local government may establish a revolving loan fund and a loan loss reserve fund for the purpose of financing or assisting in the financing of the purchase and installation of distributed generation renewable energy sources or energy efficiency improvements that are permanently fixed to residential, commercial, or other real property. A local government may establish other local government energy efficiency and distributed generation renewable energy source finance programs funded through federal grants. A local government may use State and federal grants and loans and its general revenue for this financing. The annual interest rate charged for the use of funds from the revolving fund may not exceed eight percent (8%) per annum, excluding other fees for loan application review and origination. The term of any loan originated under this section may not be greater than 20 years.

(c) Definition. As used in this Article, "renewable energy source" has the same meaning as "renewable energy resource" in G.S. 62-133.8.

"Article 14.

"Judicial Review.

**"§ 160D-14-1. Declaratory judgments.**

Challenges of legislative decisions of governing boards, including the construction or validity of ordinances adopted pursuant to this Chapter, and actions authorized by G.S. 160D-4-5(b) may be brought pursuant to Article 26 of Chapter 1 of the General Statutes. The governmental unit making the challenged legislative decision shall be named a party to the action.

**"§ 160D-14-2. Appeals in the nature of certiorari.**

(a) Applicability. This section applies to appeals of quasi-judicial decisions of decision-making boards when that appeal is in the nature of certiorari as required by this Chapter.

(b) Filing the Petition. An appeal in the nature of certiorari shall be initiated by filing petition for writ of certiorari with the superior court. The petition shall:

- (1) State the facts that demonstrate that the petitioner has standing to seek review.
- (2) Set forth allegations to sufficiently give the court and parties notice of the grounds upon which the petitioner contends that an error was made.
- (3) Set forth with particularity the allegations and facts, if any, in support of allegations that, as the result of an impermissible conflict as described in G.S. 160D-1-9, or locally adopted conflict rules, the decision-making body was not sufficiently impartial to comply with due process principles.
- (4) Set forth the relief the petitioner seeks.

(d) Standing. A petition may be filed under this section only by a petitioner who has standing to challenge the decision being appealed. The following persons shall have standing to file a petition under this section:

- (1) Any person possessing any of the following criteria:
  - a. An ownership interest in the property that is the subject of the decision being appealed, a leasehold interest in the property that is the subject of the decision being appealed, or an interest created by easement, restriction, or covenant in the property that is the subject of the decision being appealed.
  - b. An option or contract to purchase the property that is the subject of the decision being appealed.
  - c. An applicant before the decision-making board whose decision is being appealed.
- (2) Any other person who will suffer special damages as the result of the decision being appealed.
- (3) An incorporated or unincorporated association to which owners or lessees of property in a designated area belong by virtue of their owning or leasing property in that area, or an association otherwise organized to protect and foster the interest of the particular neighborhood or local area, so long as at least one of the members of the association would have standing as an individual to challenge the decision being appealed, and the association was not created in response to the particular development or issue that is the subject of the appeal.
- (4) A local government whose decision-making board has made a decision that the governing board believes improperly grants a variance from or is otherwise inconsistent with the proper interpretation of an ordinance adopted by that governing board.

(e) Respondent. The respondent named in the petition shall be the local government whose decision-making board made the decision that is being appealed, except that if the petitioner is a local government that has filed a petition pursuant to subdivision (4) of subsection (d) of this section, then the respondent shall be the decision-making board. If the

petitioner is not the applicant before the decision-making board whose decision is being appealed, the petitioner shall also name that applicant as a respondent. Any petitioner may name as a respondent any person with an ownership or leasehold interest in the property that is the subject of the decision being appealed who participated in the hearing, or was an applicant, before the decision-making board.

(f) Writ of Certiorari. Upon filing the petition, the petitioner shall present the petition and a proposed writ of certiorari to the clerk of superior court of the county in which the matter arose. The writ shall direct the respondent local government, or the respondent decision-making board if the petitioner is a local government that has filed a petition pursuant to subdivision (4) of subsection (d) of this section, to prepare and certify to the court the record of proceedings below within a specified date. The writ shall also direct that the petitioner shall serve the petition and the writ upon each respondent named therein in the manner provided for service of a complaint under Rule 4(j) of the Rules of Civil Procedure, except that, if the respondent is a decision-making board, the petition and the writ shall be served upon the chair of that decision-making board. Rule 4(j)(5)d. of the Rules of Civil Procedure shall apply in the event the chair of a decision-making board cannot be found. No summons shall be issued. The clerk shall issue the writ without notice to the respondent or respondents if the petition has been properly filed and the writ is in proper form. A copy of the executed writ shall be filed with the court.

(g) Answer to the Petition. The respondent may, but need not, file an answer to the petition, except that, if the respondent contends that any petitioner lacks standing to bring the appeal, that contention must be set forth in an answer served on all petitioners at least 30 days prior to the hearing on the petition.

(h) Intervention. Rule 24 of the Rules of Civil Procedure shall govern motions to intervene as a petitioner or respondent in an action initiated under this section with the following exceptions:

(1) Any person described in subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of this section shall have standing to intervene and shall be allowed to intervene as a matter of right.

(2) Any person, other than one described in subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of this section, who seeks to intervene as a petitioner must demonstrate that the person would have had standing to challenge the decision being appealed in accordance with subdivisions (2) through (4) of subsection (d) of this section.

(3) Any person, other than one described in subdivision (d)(1) of this section, who seeks to intervene as a respondent must demonstrate that the person would have had standing to file a petition in accordance with subdivisions (2) through (4) of subsection (d) of this section if the decision-making board had made a decision that is consistent with the relief sought by the petitioner.

(i) The Record. The record shall consist of the decision and all documents and exhibits submitted to the decision-making board whose decision is being appealed, together with the minutes of the meeting or meetings at which the decision being appealed was considered. Upon request of any party, the record shall also contain an audio or videotape of the meeting or meetings at which the decision being appealed was considered if such a recording was made. Any party may also include in the record a transcript of the proceedings, which shall be prepared at the cost of the party choosing to include it. The parties may agree that matters unnecessary to the court's decision be deleted from the record. The record shall be bound and paginated or otherwise organized for the convenience of the parties and the court. A copy of the record shall be served by the local government respondent, or the respondent decision-making board, upon all petitioners within three days after it is filed with the court.

(j) Hearing on the Record. The court shall hear and decide all issues raised by the petition by reviewing the record submitted in accordance with subsection (i) of this section. The court may, in its discretion, allow the record to be supplemented with affidavits, testimony of witnesses, or documentary or other evidence if, and to the extent that, the record is not adequate to allow an appropriate determination of the following issues:

(1) Whether a petitioner or intervenor has standing.

(2) Whether, as a result of impermissible conflict as described in G.S. 160D-1-9 or locally adopted conflict rules, the decision-making body was not sufficiently impartial to comply with due process principles.

(3) Whether the decision-making body erred for the reasons set forth in sub-subdivisions a. and b. of subdivision (1) of subsection (k) of this section.

(k) Scope of Review.

(1) When reviewing a decision of a decision-making board under the provisions of this section, the court shall ensure that the rights of petitioners have not been prejudiced because the decision-making body's findings, inferences, conclusions, or decisions were:

a. In violation of constitutional provisions, including those protecting procedural due process rights.

b. In excess of the statutory authority conferred upon the local government or the authority conferred upon the decision-making board by ordinance.

c. Inconsistent with applicable procedures specified by statute or ordinance.

d. Affected by other error of law.

e. Unsupported by competent, material, and substantial evidence in view of the entire record.

f. Arbitrary or capricious.

(2) When the issue before the court is whether the decision-making board erred in interpreting an ordinance, the court shall review that issue de novo. The court shall consider the interpretation of the decision-making board, but is not bound by that interpretation, and may freely substitute its judgment as appropriate.

(3) The term "competent evidence," as used in this subsection, shall not preclude reliance by the decision-making board on evidence that would not be admissible under the rules of evidence as applied in the trial division of the General Court of Justice if (i) the evidence was admitted without objection or (ii) the evidence appears to be sufficiently trustworthy and was admitted under such circumstances that it was reasonable for the decision-making board to rely upon it. The term "competent evidence," as used in this subsection, shall not be deemed to include the opinion testimony of lay witnesses as to any of the following:

a. The use of property in a particular way affects the value of other property.

b. The increase in vehicular traffic resulting from a proposed development poses a danger to the public safety.

c. Matters about which only expert testimony would generally be admissible under the rules of evidence.

(l) Decision of the Court. Following its review of the decision-making board in accordance with subsection (k) of this section, the court may affirm the decision, reverse the decision and remand the case with appropriate instructions, or remand the case for further

proceedings. If the court does not affirm the decision below in its entirety, then the court shall determine what relief should be granted to the petitioners:

- (1) If the court concludes that the error committed by the decision-making board is procedural only, the court may remand the case for further proceedings to correct the procedural error.
- (2) If the court concludes that the decision-making board has erred by failing to make findings of fact such that the court cannot properly perform its function, then the court may remand the case with appropriate instructions so long as the record contains competent, material, and substantial evidence that could support the decision below with appropriate findings of fact. However, findings of fact are not necessary when the record sufficiently reveals the basis for the decision below or when the material facts are undisputed and the case presents only an issue of law.
- (3) If the court concludes that the decision by the decision-making board is not supported by competent, material, and substantial evidence in the record or is based upon an error of law, then the court may remand the case with an order that directs the decision-making board to take whatever action should have been taken had the error not been committed or to take such other action as is necessary to correct the error. Specifically:
  - a. If the court concludes that a permit was wrongfully denied because the denial was not based on competent, material, and substantial evidence or was otherwise based on an error of law, the court may remand with instructions that the permit be issued, subject to reasonable and appropriate conditions.
  - b. If the court concludes that a permit was wrongfully issued because the issuance was not based on competent, material, and substantial evidence or was otherwise based on an error of law, the court may remand with instructions that the permit be revoked.

(m) Ancillary Injunctive Relief. Upon motion of a party to a proceeding under this section, and under appropriate circumstances, the court may issue an injunctive order requiring any other party to that proceeding to take certain action or refrain from taking action that is consistent with the court's decision on the merits of the appeal.

**"§ 160D-14-3. Appeals of decisions on subdivision plats.**

(a) When a subdivision ordinance adopted under this Chapter provides that the decision whether to approve or deny a preliminary or final subdivision plat is quasi-judicial, then that decision of the board shall be subject to review by the superior court by proceedings in the nature of certiorari. The provisions of G.S. 160D-4-6 and this section shall apply to those appeals.

(b) When a subdivision ordinance adopted under this Chapter provides that the decision whether to approve or deny a preliminary or final subdivision plat is administrative, then that decision of the board shall be subject to review by filing an action in superior court seeking appropriate declaratory or equitable relief within 30 days from receipt of the written notice of the decision, which shall be made as provided in G.S. 160D-4-3(b).

(c) For purposes of this section, an ordinance shall be deemed to authorize a quasi-judicial decision if the decision-making entity under G.S. 160D-8-3(c) is authorized to decide whether to approve or deny the plat based not only upon whether the application complies with the specific requirements set forth in the ordinance, but also on whether the application complies with one or more generally stated standards requiring a discretionary decision to be made.

**"§ 160D-14-4. Other civil actions**



1 Except as expressly stated, this Article does not limit the availability to any party of civil  
2 actions otherwise authorized by law or alter the times in which they may be brought.

3 **"§ 160D-14-5. Statutes of limitations.**

4 (a) Zoning Map Adoption Or Amendments. A cause of action as to the validity of any  
5 ordinance adopting or amending a zoning map adopted under this Chapter or other applicable  
6 law or a development agreement adopted under Article 10 of this Chapter shall accrue upon  
7 adoption of such ordinance and shall be brought within sixty days as provided in G.S. 1-54.1.

8 (b) Text Adoption or Amendment. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (a) of  
9 this section, an action challenging the validity of any development regulation adopted under  
10 this Chapter or other applicable law shall be brought within one year of the accrual of such  
11 action. Such an action accrues when the party bringing such action first has standing to  
12 challenge the ordinance. A challenge to an ordinance on the basis of an alleged defect in the  
13 adoption process shall be brought within three years after the adoption of the ordinance.

14 (c) Enforcement Defense. Nothing in this section or in G.S. 1-54(10) or G.S. 1-54.1  
15 shall bar a party in an action involving the enforcement of a development regulation from  
16 raising as a defense to such enforcement action the invalidity of the ordinance. Nothing in this  
17 section or in G.S. 1-54(10) or G.S. 1-54.1 shall bar a party who files a timely appeal from an  
18 order, requirement, decision, or determination made by an administrative official contending  
19 that such party is in violation of a zoning or unified development ordinance from raising in the  
20 judicial appeal the invalidity of such ordinance as a defense to such order, requirement,  
21 decision, or determination. A party in an enforcement action or appeal may not assert the  
22 invalidity of the ordinance on the basis of an alleged defect in the adoption process unless the  
23 defense is formally raised within three years of the adoption of the challenged ordinance. As  
24 provided by G.S. 160D-4-5(b), a party is not required to appeal an enforcement decision to the  
25 board of adjustment prior to initiating a judicial appeal challenging the validity of the ordinance  
26 or regulation or to raise constitutional claims.

27 (d) Quasi-Judicial Decisions. Unless specifically provided otherwise, a petition for  
28 review of a quasi-judicial decision shall be filed with the clerk of superior court by the later of  
29 30 days after the decision is effective or after a written copy thereof is given in accordance with  
30 G.S. 160D-4-6(j). When first-class mail is used to deliver notice, three days shall be added to  
31 the time to file the petition."

32 **SECTION 4.1.** G.S. 1-54(10) is amended to read as follows:

33 "(10) Actions contesting the validity of any zoning or unified development  
34 ordinance or any provision thereof adopted under ~~Part 3 of Article 18 of~~  
35 ~~Chapter 153A or Part 3 of Article 19 of Chapter 160A~~Chapter 160D of the  
36 General Statutes or other applicable law, other than an ordinance adopting or  
37 amending a zoning map or approving a ~~special-use, conditional-use, or~~  
38 conditional zoning district rezoning request. Such an action accrues when  
39 the party bringing such action first has standing to challenge the ordinance;  
40 provided that, a challenge to an ordinance on the basis of an alleged defect in  
41 the adoption process shall be brought within three years after the adoption of  
42 the ordinance."

43 **SECTION 4.2.** G.S. 1-54.1 is amended to read as follows:

44 **"§ 1-54.1. Two months.**

45 Within two months an action contesting the validity of any ordinance adopting or amending  
46 a zoning map or approving a ~~special-use, conditional-use, or~~ conditional zoning district  
47 rezoning request under ~~Part 3 of Article 18 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes or Part 3 of~~  
48 ~~Article 19 of Chapter 160A~~Article 7 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes or other  
49 applicable law. Such an action accrues upon adoption of such ordinance or amendment. As  
50 used herein, the term "two months" shall be calculated as sixty days."

51 **SECTION 4.3.** G.S. 63-31(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Every political subdivision may adopt, administer, and enforce, under the police power ~~and in the manner and upon the conditions hereinafter prescribed, or as a land development regulation under Chapter 160D of the General Statutes,~~ airport zoning regulations, which regulations shall divide the area surrounding any airport within the jurisdiction of said political subdivision into zones, and, within such zones, specify the land uses permitted, and regulate and restrict the height to which structures and trees may be erected or allowed to grow. In adopting or revising any such zoning regulations, the political subdivision shall consider, among other things, the character of the flying operations expected to be conducted at the airport, the nature of the terrain, the height of existing structures and trees above the level of the airport, the possibility of lowering or removing existing obstructions, and the views of the agency of the federal government charged with the fostering of civil aeronautics, as to the aerial approaches necessary to safe flying operations at the airport."

**SECTION 4.4.** G.S. 63-32(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Variances. – Any person desiring to erect any structures, or increase the height of any structure, or permit the growth of any tree, or otherwise use his property, in violation of airport zoning regulations adopted under this Article, may apply to the board of appeals, as provided in G.S. 63-33, subsection (c), for a variance from the zoning regulations in question. Such variances shall be ~~allowed where a literal application or enforcement of the regulations would result in practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship and the relief granted would not be contrary to the public interest but do substantial justice~~ considered pursuant to G.S. 160D-7-5(d) and be in accordance with the spirit of the regulations and this Article."

**SECTION 4.5.** G.S. 63-33 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 63-33. Procedure.**

(a) Adoption of Zoning Regulations. – No airport zoning regulations shall be adopted, amended, or changed under this Article except by action of the legislative body of the political subdivision in question, or the joint board provided for in G.S. 63-31, subsection (c), ~~after a public hearing in relation thereto, at which parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard. At least 10 days' notice of the hearing shall be published in an official paper, or a paper of general circulation, in the political subdivision or subdivisions in which the airport is located, following the procedures for adoption of development regulations in Article 6 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes.~~

(b) Administration of Zoning Regulations – Administrative Agency. – The legislative body of any political subdivision adopting airport zoning regulations under this Article may delegate the duty of administering and enforcing such regulations to any administrative agency under its jurisdiction, or may create a new administrative agency to perform such duty, but such administrative agency shall not be or include any member of the board of appeals. The duties of such administrative agency shall include that of hearing and deciding all permits under G.S. 63-32, subsection (a), but such agency shall not have or exercise any of the powers delegated to the board of appeals.

(c) Administration of Airport Zoning Regulations – Board of Appeals. – Airport zoning regulations adopted under this Article shall provide for a board of appeals to have and exercise the following powers:

- (1) To hear and decide appeals from any order, requirement, decision, or determination made by the administrative agency in the enforcement of this ~~Article or of any ordinance adopted pursuant thereto;~~ Article.
- (2) To hear and decide special ~~exceptions to the terms of the ordinance use permits~~ permits upon which such board may be required to pass under such ~~ordinance; ordinance.~~
- (3) To hear and decide specific ~~variances under G.S. 63-32, subsection (b);~~ variances.

A zoning board of adjustment may be appointed as the board of appeals. Otherwise, the board of appeals shall consist of five members, each to be appointed for a term of three years and to be removable for cause by the appointing authority upon written charges and after a public hearing. G.S. 160D-4-5 and G.S. 160D-4-6 apply to appeals, special use permits, and variance petitions made pursuant to this section.~~Where a zoning board of appeals or adjustment already exists, it may be appointed as the board of appeals. Otherwise, the board of appeals shall consist of five members, each to be appointed for a term of three years and to be removable for cause by the appointing authority upon written charges and after public hearing.~~

~~The board shall adopt rules in accordance with the provisions of any ordinance adopted under this Article. Meetings of the board shall be held at the call of the chairman and at such other times as the board may determine. The chairman, or in his absence the acting chairman, may administer oaths and compel the attendance of witnesses. All meetings of the board shall be public. The board shall keep minutes of its proceedings, showing the vote of each member upon each question, or, if absent or failing to vote, indicating such fact, and shall keep records of its examinations and other official actions, all of which shall immediately be filed in the office of the board and shall be a public record.~~

~~Appeals to the board may be taken by any person aggrieved, or by any officer, department, board, or bureau of the political subdivision affected, by any decision of the administrative agency. An appeal must be taken within a reasonable time, as provided by the rules of the board, by filing with the agency from which the appeal is taken and with the board, a notice of appeal specifying the grounds thereof. The agency from which the appeal is taken shall forthwith transmit to the board all the papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed from was taken.~~

~~An appeal shall stay all proceedings in furtherance of the action appealed from, unless the agency from which the appeal is taken certifies to the board, after the notice of appeal has been filed with it, that by reason of the facts stated in the certificate a stay would, in its opinion, cause imminent peril to life or property. In such case proceedings shall not be stayed otherwise than by a restraining order which may be granted by the board or by a court of record on application on notice to the agency from which the appeal is taken and on due cause shown.~~

~~The board shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing of the appeal, give public notice and due notice to the parties in interest, and decide the same within a reasonable time. Upon the hearing any party may appear in person or by agent or by attorney.~~

~~The board may, in conformity with the provisions of this Article, reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or modify, the order, requirement, decision or determination appealed from and may make such order, requirement, decision or determination as ought to be made, and to that end shall have all the powers of the administrative agency from which the appeal is taken.~~

~~The concurring vote of a majority of the members of the board shall be sufficient to reverse any order, requirement, decision, or determination of the administrative agency, or to decide in favor of the applicant on any matter upon which it is required to pass under any such ordinance, or to effect any variation in such ordinance."~~

**SECTION 4.6.** G.S. 63-34 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 63-34. Judicial review.**

Administrative and quasi-judicial decisions made pursuant to this Article are subject to judicial review as provided by G.S. 160D-14-1.

(a) ~~Any person aggrieved by any decision of the board of appeals, or any taxpayer, or any officer, department, board, or bureau of the political subdivision, may present to the superior court a verified petition setting forth that the decision is illegal, in whole or in part, and specifying the grounds of the illegality. Such petition shall be presented to the court within 30 days after the decision is filed in the office of the board. Such petition shall comply with the provisions of G.S. 160A-393.~~

(b) ~~The allowance of the writ shall not stay proceedings upon the decision appealed from, but the court may, on application, on notice to the board and on due cause shown, grant a restraining order.~~

(c) ~~The board of appeals shall not be required to return the original papers acted upon by it, but it shall be sufficient to return certified or sworn copies thereof or of such portions thereof as may be called for by the writ. The return shall concisely set forth such other facts as may be pertinent and material to show the grounds of the decision appealed from and shall be verified.~~

(d) ~~Repealed by Session Laws 2009-421, s. 3, effective January 1, 2010.~~

(e) ~~Costs shall not be allowed against the board of appeals unless it appears to the court that it acted with gross negligence, in bad faith, or with malice, in making the decision appealed from."~~

**SECTION 4.7.** G.S. 63-35 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 63-35. Enforcement and remedies.**

G.S. 160D-4-4 applies to ordinances adopted pursuant to this Article for the purposes of enforcement and remedies pertaining to violations of those ordinances.~~Each violation of this Article or of any regulations, order, or ruling promulgated or made pursuant to this Article, shall constitute a Class 3 misdemeanor, and each day a violation continues to exist shall constitute a separate offense. In addition, the political subdivision within which the property is located may institute in any court of competent jurisdiction, an action to prevent, restrain, correct or abate any violation of this Article, or of airport zoning regulations adopted under this Article, or of any order or ruling made in connection with their administration or enforcement, and the court shall adjudge to the plaintiff such relief, by way of injunction (which may be mandatory) or otherwise, as may be proper under all the facts and circumstances of the case, in order fully to effectuate the purposes of this Article and of the regulations adopted and orders and rulings made pursuant thereto."~~

**SECTION 4.8.** G.S. 113A-208 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 113A-208. Regulation of mountain ridge construction by counties and cities.**

(a) Any county or city may adopt, effective not later than January 1, 1984, and may enforce an ordinance that regulates the construction of tall buildings or structures on protected mountain ridges by any person. The ordinance may provide for the issuance of permits to construct tall buildings on protected mountain ridges, the conditioning of such permits, and the denial of permits for such construction. Any ordinance adopted hereunder shall be based upon studies of the mountain ridges within the county, a statement of objectives to be sought by the ordinance, and plans for achieving these objectives. Any such county ordinance shall apply countywide except as otherwise provided in G.S. 160A-360, Chapter 160D of the General Statutes, and any such city ordinance shall apply citywide, to construction of tall buildings on protected mountain ridges within the city or county, as the case may be.

A city with a population of 50,000 or more may adopt, prior to January 1, 1986, an ordinance eliminating the requirement for an elevation of 3,000 feet, as permitted by G.S. 113A-206(6).

...

(f) Any county or city that adopts an ordinance pursuant to this section ~~must hold a public hearing before adopting the ordinance upon the question of adopting the ordinance or of allowing the construction of tall buildings on protected mountain ridges to be governed by G.S. 113A-209. The public hearing required by this section shall be held upon at least 10 days' notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the unit adopting the ordinance. Testimony at the hearing shall be recorded and any and all exhibits shall be preserved within the custody of the governing body. The testimony and evidence shall be made available for inspection and scrutiny by any person.~~ shall follow the procedures in Article 6 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes."

1           **SECTION 4.9.** G.S. 113A-211(a) reads as rewritten:

2           "(a) Violations of this Article shall be subject to the same criminal sanctions, civil  
3 ~~penalties—penalties,~~ and equitable remedies as ~~violations of county ordinances under~~  
4 ~~G.S. 153A-123, provided in G.S. 160D-4-4."~~

5           **SECTION 4.10.** G.S. 130A-55(17) reads as rewritten:

6           **"§ 130A-55. Corporate powers.**

7           A sanitary district board shall be a body politic and corporate and may sue and be sued in  
8 matters relating to the sanitary district. Notwithstanding any limitation in the petition under  
9 G.S. 130A-48, but subject to the provisions of G.S. 130A-55(17)e, each sanitary district may  
10 exercise all of the powers granted to sanitary districts by this Article. In addition, the sanitary  
11 district board shall have the following powers:

12           ...

13           (17) For the purpose of promoting and protecting the public health, safety and the  
14 general welfare of the State, a sanitary district board is authorized to  
15 establish as zoning units any portions of the sanitary district not under the  
16 control of the United States or this State or any agency or instrumentality of  
17 either, in accordance with the following:

- 18           a. No sanitary district board shall designate an area a zoning area until a  
19 petition signed by two-thirds of the qualified voters in the area, as  
20 shown by the registration books used in the last general election, and  
21 with a petition signed by two-thirds of the owners of real property in  
22 the area, as shown by the records in the office of the register of deeds  
23 for the county, is filed with the sanitary district board. The petition  
24 must be accompanied by a map of the proposed zoning area. The  
25 board shall hold a public hearing to obtain comment on the proposed  
26 creation of the zoning area. A notice of public hearing must be  
27 published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least  
28 two times, and a copy of the notice shall be posted at the county  
29 courthouse and in three other public places in the sanitary district.
- 30           b. When a zoning area is established within a sanitary district, the  
31 sanitary district board as to the zoning area shall have all rights,  
32 privileges, powers and duties granted to ~~municipal corporations~~  
33 ~~under Part 3, Article 19, Chapter 160A—local governments under~~  
34 ~~Article 7 of Chapter 160D~~ of the General Statutes. However, the  
35 sanitary district board shall not be required to appoint any zoning  
36 commission or board of adjustment. If neither a zoning commission  
37 nor board of adjustment is appointed, the sanitary district board shall  
38 have all rights.
- 39           c. A sanitary district board may enter into an agreement with any city,  
40 town or sanitary district for the establishment of a joint zoning  
41 commission.
- 42           d. A sanitary district board is authorized to use the income of the  
43 district and levy and collect taxes upon the taxable property within  
44 the district necessary to carry out and enforce the rules and  
45 provisions of this subsection.
- 46           e. This subsection shall apply only to sanitary districts which adjoin and  
47 are contiguous to an incorporated city or town and are located within  
48 three miles or less of the boundaries of two other cities or towns."

49           **SECTION 4.11.** G.S. 143-214.5(d) reads as rewritten:

50           "(d) **Mandatory Local Programs.** – The Department shall assist local governments to  
51 develop water supply watershed protection programs that comply with this section. Local



government compliance programs shall include an implementing local ordinance and shall provide for maintenance, inspection, and enforcement procedures. As part of its assistance to local governments, the Commission shall approve and make available a model local water supply watershed management and protection ordinance. The model management and protection ordinance adopted by the Commission shall, at a minimum, include as options (i) controlling development density, (ii) providing for performance-based alternatives to development density controls that are based on sound engineering principles, and (iii) a combination of both (i) and (ii). Local governments shall administer and enforce the minimum management requirements. Every local government that has within its jurisdiction all or a portion of a water supply watershed shall submit a local water supply watershed management and protection ordinance to the Commission for approval. Local governments may adopt such ordinances pursuant to their general police power, power to regulate the subdivision of land, zoning power, or any combination of such powers. In adopting a local ordinance that imposes water supply watershed management requirements that are more stringent than those adopted by the Commission, ~~a county must comply with the notice provisions of G.S. 153A-343 and a municipality must comply with the notice provisions of G.S. 160A-384. a local government must comply with the provisions of Article 6 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes.~~ This section shall not be construed to affect the validity of any local ordinance adopted for the protection of water supply watersheds prior to completion of the review of the ordinance by the Commission or prior to the assumption by the Commission of responsibility for a local water supply watershed protection program. Local governments may create or designate agencies to administer and enforce such programs. The Commission shall approve a local program only if it determines that the requirements of the program equal or exceed the minimum statewide water supply watershed management requirements adopted pursuant to this section."

**SECTION 4.12.** G.S. 143-215.57 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 143-215.57. Procedures in issuing permits.**

(a) A local government may establish application forms and require maps, plans, and other information necessary for the issuance of permits in a manner consonant with the objectives of this Part. For this purpose a local government may take into account anticipated development in the foreseeable future that may be adversely affected by the obstruction, as well as existing development. They shall consider the effects of a proposed artificial obstruction in a stream in creating danger to life and property by:

- (1) Water that may be backed up or diverted by the obstruction.
- (2) The danger that the obstruction will be swept downstream to the injury of others.
- (3) The injury or damage at the site of the obstruction itself.

(b) In prescribing standards and requirements for the issuance of permits under this Part and in issuing permits, local governments shall proceed as in the case of an ordinance for the better government of the county or city as the case may be. Local government jurisdiction for these ordinances shall be as provided by Article 2 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes. Article 4 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes applies to the administration, enforcement, and appeals regarding these ordinances.~~A city may exercise the powers granted in this Part not only within its corporate boundaries but also within the area of its extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction. A county may exercise the powers granted in this Part at any place within the county that is outside the zoning jurisdiction of a city in the county. If a city does not exercise the powers granted in this Part in the city's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction, the county may exercise the powers granted in this Part in the city's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction. The county may regulate territory within the zoning jurisdiction of any city whose governing body, by resolution, agrees to the regulation. The governing body of a city may, upon one year's written notice, withdraw its approval of the county regulations, and those regulations shall have no further effect within the city's jurisdiction.~~

(e) ~~The local governing body is hereby empowered to adopt regulations it may deem necessary concerning the form, time, and manner of submission of applications for permits under this Part. These regulations may provide for the issuance of permits under this Part by the local governing body or by an agency designated by the local governing body, as prescribed by the governing body. Every final decision granting or denying a permit under this Part shall be subject to review by the superior court of the county, with the right of jury trial at the election of the party seeking review. The time and manner of election of a jury trial shall be governed by G.S. 1A-1, Rule 38(b) of the Rules of Civil Procedure. Pending the final disposition of an appeal, no action shall be taken that would be unlawful in the absence of a permit issued under this Part."~~

**SECTION 4.13.** G.S. 143-215.58(a1) reads as rewritten:

"(a1) A local government may use all of the remedies available for the enforcement of ordinances under ~~Chapters 153A and 160A~~ Chapters 153A, 160A, and 160D of the General Statutes to enforce an ordinance adopted pursuant to this Part."

**SECTION 5.1.** G.S. 153A-102.1 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.2.** G.S. 160A-4.1 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.3.** G.S. 160A-181.1 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.4.** G.S. 153A-143 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.5.** G.S. 160A-199 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.6.** G.S. 153A-144 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.7.** G.S. 160A-201 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.8.** G.S. 153A-452 is repealed.

**SECTION 5.9.** G.S. 153A-455 is repealed.

**SECTION 6.** Article 23 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes is amended by adding the following new sections to read:

**"§ 153A-457. Submission of statement concerning improvements.**

A county may by ordinance require that when a property owner improves property at a cost of more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) but less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), the property owner must, within 14 days after the completion of the work, submit to the county assessor a statement setting forth the nature of the improvement and the total cost thereof.

**"§ 153A-458. Authorization to provide grants.**

A county may provide grants to unaffiliated, qualified private providers of high-speed Internet access service, as that term is defined in G.S. 160A-340(4), for the purpose of expanding service in unserved areas for economic development in the county. The grants shall be awarded on a technology neutral basis, shall be open to qualified applicants, and may require matching funds by the private provider. A county shall seek and consider request for proposals from qualified private providers within the county prior to awarding a broadband grant and shall use reasonable means to ensure that potential applicants are made aware of the grant, including, at a minimum, compliance with the notice procedures set forth in G.S. 160A-340.6(c). The county shall use only unrestricted general fund revenue for the grants. For the purposes of this section, a qualified private provider is a private provider of high-speed Internet access service in the State prior to the issuance of the grant proposal. Nothing in this section authorizes a county to provide high-speed Internet broadband service."

**SECTION 7.** If any provision of this act or its application is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this act that can be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are severable.

**SECTION 8.1.** Any otherwise valid permit or development approval made prior to July 1, 2016, shall not be invalid based on inconsistency with the provisions of this Act. The

1 validity of any plan adopted prior to July 1, 2016, is not affected by a failure to comply with the  
2 procedural requirements of G.S. 160D-5-1(b).

3 **SECTION 8.2.** Any special use district or conditional use district zoning district  
4 that is valid and in effect as of July 1, 2016, shall be deemed a conditional zoning district  
5 consistent with the terms of this act and the special or conditional use permits issued  
6 concurrently with establishment of those districts shall be valid as specified in Section 8.1 of  
7 this act. Any valid "conditional use permit" issued prior to July 1, 2016, shall be deemed a  
8 "special use permit" consistent with the provisions of this act.

9 **SECTION 8.3.** Any local government that has adopted zoning regulations but that  
10 has not adopted a comprehensive plan shall adopt such a plan no later than December 31, 2017,  
11 in order to retain the authority to adopt and apply zoning regulations.

12 **SECTION 9.** If House Bill 36, House Bill 201, House Bill 255, House Bill 483,  
13 Senate Bill 300, or Senate Bill 453 become law, the provisions therein shall be deemed to be  
14 incorporated within this act.

15 **SECTION 10.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2016, and applies to local  
16 government development regulation decisions made on or after that date. Provided, however,  
17 Part 3A of Article 18 of Chapter 153A and Part 3D of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the  
18 General Statutes are repealed when this act becomes law and are replaced by the provisions of  
19 Article 10 of Chapter 160D as set forth in this act and these provisions shall apply to  
20 development agreements that become effective on or after that date.